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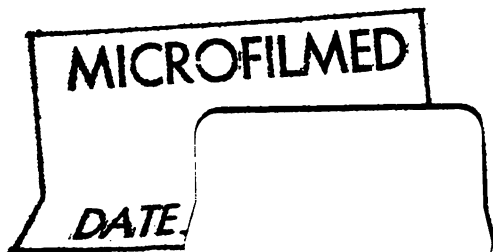
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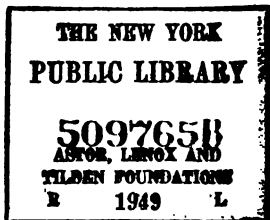
OR

PERSONALITY AND INTERCOURSE

BY  
H. CLAY TRUMBULL



PHILADELPHIA  
JOHN D. WATTLES, PUBLISHER  
1889



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BY

H. CLAY TRUMBULL

## PREFACE.

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Lessons from one man's experiences and observations will not be of value to all. But lessons from any man's experiences and observations will be of value to some. No man stands, in his feelings and sympathies, for his entire race. But every man, in his sympathies and feelings, stands for a class.

Hence it is, that whatever truths have made a profound impression on a man in the progress of his life-course are likely to make a correspondent impression on others who are like him, if he can bring those truths with any vividness before them. And when a series of related truths have excited interest in their detached separateness, they will hardly fail to excite fresh interest in their exhibited relation to one another and to a common central truth.

The essays in this volume are an outcome of their writer's observings and experienings in his varied life-course. They were received with interest as editorial contributions in the pages of The Sunday School Times, while appearing there, one by one, during a term of ten years or more; and their republication has been urged by many who desire them for preservation in a permanent form. They are now presented in a new light, in a logical order for the elucidation and emphasis of a truth which is common to them all.

The gaining of the thoughts of this volume has not been without cost to its writer. His hope is that the considering of them will not be without stimulus and profit to its readers.

H. C. T.

PHILADELPHIA,

*August 14, 1889.*

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## I.

### *ALL BY ONE'S SELF.*

---

Notwithstanding all that is said—and said truly—about the help and comfort of human love and human friendship, about the duty of living for others, and the impossibility of living all by one's self, the truth remains that in his realest personality every man does, and must, live absolutely by himself, without the possibility of being fully understood by any one else; having his own peculiar feelings, duties, destiny—unshared, in the truest sense, by any human being whatsoever.

“We are spirits clad in veils;  
Man by man was never seen;  
All our deep communing fails  
To remove the shadowy screen.

“Heart to heart was never known;  
Mind to mind did never meet;  
We are columns left alone  
Of a temple once complete.”



"The heart knoweth its own bitterness;  
And a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy."

In the tabernacle of every human soul there is an outer court, for the free coming and going of all one's chosen people; and an inner court, or a holy place, where only the priests of one's affections may find admission. But beyond the veil of the heart's holy place there is an inner sanctuary, which only the high-priest of one's own personality can enter. That holy of holies is not lighted from without. It is curtained in on every side. It would be in darkness even to the high-priest himself, unless the shekinah of God's presence were there to give light to the one within.

And no high-priest of the soul ever yet made full disclosure of all that he had learned and felt in that innermost sanctuary of his being. If he should attempt it his lips would be sealed in silence, like the lips of Zacharias when he had received the message of Gabriel which he might not yet disclose; and his hand would be stayed by his heart before he could transcribe it for the eyes of others.

"For no men or women that live to-day,  
Be they as good or as bad as they may,  
    Ever would dare to leave  
In faintest pencil or boldest ink,  
All they truly and really think,  
What they have said, and what they have done,  
What they have lived, and what they have felt,  
Under the stars or under the sun."

Even if we devoutly wished to disclose ourselves wholly and unreservedly to another, it would not be possible for us to do so, while the veiling of our spirits in the flesh is as complete as now. How could a loving mother make clear to her infant child her own heart with its shapings by the experiences of the years that she has lived? How could a person with open eyes portray the beauties of the world about him to one who was born blind? How could two persons of different nationalities have free and unrestricted converse while each had but an imperfect knowledge of the other's language? Every soul has its own unique experiences, has seen its own visions, and puts its own meaning into every word of its speech; and

every other soul is deaf, or blind, or limited in intellect, in its effort to comprehend the disclosures of another's soul.

None of us are fully understood in this life. None of us really want to be. All of us would be glad to have our best side better known than now,—our highest aims and aspirations to be disclosed clearly to those whom we love. Most of us feel that we should be the gainers in the good opinion of our dear ones if only our nobler motives and desires in their behalf, and our purest and most unselfish endeavors for their welfare, were laid bare to them. But none of us would be willing that our worst thoughts, our lowest imaginings, our most ignoble feelings, should be plainly recognized by any other human being—even our best loved and most partial friend or “other self.” And against the mental gaze of the common herd we shut ourselves up as within walls of adamant.

Every now and then we are startled by the unexpected disclosure of some man's character as utterly at variance with the popular

estimate of him; and the exclamation, "I should never have thought that of *him!*" shows how little we know of the inner life of those who are about us on every side. A look of calmness on many a man's face may be only as the lava crust above the consuming fires of the slumbering volcano; and the play of a surface-smile on a sunny countenance is perhaps but the reflected light which dances over the ice-covered stream—whose current sweeps on beneath, in its unchecked and resistless flow.

We do not fully know the truest life of those whom we know best. Some of them are far worthier than we suppose; and others are far less worthy. This is as true of those nearest us as of those with whom our acquaintance is but casual; and it is true likewise with reference to ourselves, as viewed and judged by others.

"We hold our dear ones with a firm, strong grasp,  
We hear their voices, look into their eyes:  
And yet, betwixt us, in that clinging clasp,  
A distance lies."

The more there is to a person, the less likely he is to be fully known and understood by others; and indeed the greater is his shrinking from the full disclosure of himself to others. It is easy to see the bottom of a shallow brooklet; but who can fathom the ocean's depths? A mind that is open and empty can be known to all, but not so the mind that is densely packed with knowledge and thought. The profounder and more delicate natures are as much more retiring and secluded under observation, in contrast with the superficial and ruder natures, as the eye is more sensitive than the palm of the hand to a touch.

As Emerson puts it: "Those constitutions which can bear, in open day, the rough dealing of the world, must be of that mean and average structure, such as iron, and salt, atmospheric air, and water. But there are metals like potassium, and sodium, which, to be kept pure, must be kept under naphtha." Hence it is that "the best are accused of exclusiveness," because of "that necessity of iso-

lation which genius feels. Each must stand on his glass tripod if he would keep his electricity. Even Swedenborg, whose theory of the universe is based on affection, and who reprobates to weariness the danger and vice of pure intellect, is constrained to make an extraordinary exception: 'There are also angels who do not live consociated, but separate, house and house; these dwell in the midst of heaven because they are the best of angels.'"

Concealment of one's innermost self is to a certain extent a duty—a duty to which the most sensitive and refined natures are most keenly alive. Lord Bacon says: "Nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as body; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers and futile persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal. For he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not. Therefore set it down that a habit of secrecy is both politic and moral." Let none of us wonder, there-

fore, that we are unable to read fully our best friends. That which is still a mystery in their conduct and spirit—the something beyond all that we can see or know of their characters—may be the highest proof of their superiority. It is because there is so much in them that we cannot understand it all. Their distinctive pre-eminence as “the best of angels” renders them unable to disclose their inner selves unreservedly to us—even if they would; and forbids them to attempt doing so—even if they could.

And as in one’s feelings and character, so in one’s duty and destiny, each man must be all by himself in the world. No man’s duty can be done for him. A man of commanding influence, for example, can secure a good position for his son; but he cannot fill that position for his son, neither will any power of *his* enable his son to fill it. The son must stand or fall by himself, so far as filling that place is concerned. And how helpless we are toward enabling our friends to command from others the love and admiration which

we would like them to have! Entreaty to this end is of no avail; nor will indignation over what we deem the poor taste or bad judgment of others accomplish anything in this direction.

Each friend of ours must be by himself—in the work he does, in the credit or loss he sustains, and in the confidence and affection accorded to him. And so it must be with ourselves. And when our friend's work, and when our work, is done, then "each one of us shall give account of *himself* to God." Not as families, not as churches, not as communities, but as individuals, must we "be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that *each one* may receive the things done in the body, according to what *he* hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Even where love is holiest, and where intimacy is closest, there comes an hour when he whom the Father has called must say to those nearest and dearest to him, "Tarry ye here, while I go yonder." Each one by himself came alone into this world; each one by



himself has his own character and his own duties as he goes on through this world; each one by himself—even though he be redeemed by the blood of Christ, and be bound by the tenderest of ties to others who are also Christ's—must pass out from this world to meet his Saviour all by himself.

“Not sweeping up together,  
     In whirlwind or in cloud,  
 In the hush of the summer weather,  
     Or when storms are thundering loud;  
 But one by one we go,  
 In the sweetness none may know.”

## II.

### *THE DUTY OF BEING ONE'S SELF.*

---

Not imitation, but individuality, is recognized by every true man as the ideal of his personality. "I must be myself," he says, "whatever comes of it." To seem another than one's self is insincerity, if not hypocrisy; and hypocrisy is as despicable as sincerity is admirable. And the ideal of the true man for himself, is the ideal of others for the true man. "Be yourself, at every cost," is the counsel which his best advisers are constantly sounding in his ears.

"To thine own self be true;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Yet, as a simple matter of fact, those persons who are most desirous of being and seeming their own selves are least likely to know what it is to be one's self, or to know what

they mean by the term "one's self," when they express their sense of the duty of being one's self; and, again, those persons who most urgently press the importance of this duty on others, are as ignorant of its nature and scope as are those on whom they press it.

What is "one's self"? Is every man's self a unit in spirit and purpose and aim, without any conflict of feelings, or any struggle between contending interests of being? Or is one's self, in most cases, a seeming mass of contradictions, with varying spirit, with diverse purposes and aims, with a ceaseless conflict of feelings, and with a wearisome struggle of ever-contending interests of being, going on below the surface of the outer personality? Is there no such thing as one's better self, as distinct from one's worse self; one's nobler self, as distinct from one's unworthier self? If, indeed, one's self be, or seems to be, a double self or a cluster of selves, which self is the real self that one ought to be, or ought to seem to be, in order to be sincere beyond all doubt or question?

What is one's self? What is it to be one's self? What is it to seem one's self?

Must a man, in order to be himself, indulge his natural appetites and passions, and follow the bent of his temper and inclinations? Must he refuse to recognize a difference between his lower nature and his higher, and simply give expression at all times to his inclinations and impellings of the hour? If, on the other hand, he deliberately conceals all that which he or others would count evil in itself, or unworthy of himself as a man, and shows out only that which he and they would be ready to commend as admirable, how can he be said to be acting sincerely, or to be seeming or being himself? Is one's self, in short, one's best self, or one's worst self? Is seeming one's self seeming one's noblest self, or seeming one's unworthier self? What is one's self? What is it to be one's self? What is it to seem one's self?

One's real self is surely not his lowest and worst self, against which his higher and better self is zealously contending. No man

would admit that that was so in his own case, nor would any man claim that it would be fair to judge his fellow by that standard. On the other hand, one's real self is not himself in the direction of his highest and best promptings, if he be all the while resisting those promptings, and deliberately choosing a lower plane of living and being. One's real self is himself at his best, in the direction of his aspirings and strivings; it is himself as he wants to be, and as he is trying to be, rather than himself as he now is. Browning's David gives the real measure of every true man's nobler self:

"'Tis not what man Does which exalts him, but  
what man Would do!"

This is the self which a man ought to be and to seem to be, and this is the self which others should desire a man to be and to seem to be.

A true man is often prompted by his worst self to say or to do that which he knows to be wrong, while his better self protests against his yielding to that prompting. If at such a

time he were to speak out, or do, the wrong to which his worst self prompts him, and against which his better self protests, he would so far misrepresent or conceal his best self, by bringing his worst self into exclusive prominence. Thus doing he would fail of being himself, by being himself; fail of being his whole self, by being the lesser part of himself; fail of being the self that he is trying to be, by seeming to be the self that he is trying not to be. His real self at such a time is that self which is before him as an ideal, and toward which he is struggling,—however unsuccessfully. In this sense it is true that a man's real self is ordinarily a better self than his present self; for his real self is that which he strives to be, while his present self exhibits his lack in the direction of his strivings.

"Petroleum V. Nasby" said, at one time: "A large part of my religion consists in trying all the while not to be as mean as I know how." And there is a sense in which every man's religion ought to have more or less of

that element in its practical workings. With ourselves as we are, and with our constant promptings and impellings toward evil as we find them, it is our evident duty to be better than we are, and to show ourselves as we know that we ought to be, instead of as we find that we are inclined to be. Being one's self is, in fact, having control of one's self, rather than being controlled by one's self.

But says one, "If I *feel* angry, oughtn't I to show that that is my feeling? How can I be sincere when I simulate a feeling which is not real?" The proper guide of conduct is conviction of duty, not feeling about duty. Whatever you may *feel*, you ought to *do* and *say* that which is right. There is no merit in mere sincerity. Sincerity, like consistency, is commendable only when it is in the direction of the right. If you feel the impellings of lust or appetite, it is only to your discredit if you show your sincerity by giving open expression to your sinful desires. Your plain duty is to repress and cover up, and to try to crush out, those impellings. If you feel in-

clined to be dishonest, or untruthful, or unkind, your duty is to act as you *ought to* want to do, rather than as you *do* want to do.

That which we have no right to feel, we have no right to show when we do feel. The evil which is in one's self ought not to be shown out by one's self. It is bad enough to have it inside, and to feel it there. It is still worse to give it expression in act or in word. Being one's self by such a disclosure is being one's worst self, or is, in fact, seeming worse than one's self. If, indeed, one *ought to* feel anger against another, or ought to feel indignation at his course, one may have a duty to make a show of anger, or of indignation, accordingly, whether he feels it for the moment or not; for in all things it is one's duty to seem as he ought to feel, rather than to seem as he happens to feel.

It is in the ordinary intercourse of life that this truth has its more important applications, and that the difficulties in the way of its application are more apparent to many an honest-minded seeker after the right standard of



seeming and doing. "Ought I to seem kindly toward one, when I feel unkindly toward him?" "Is it not insincerity on my part, when I seem to like one whom I really dislike?" "How can I be myself when I conceal my feelings of disapprobation of another's character and course in my more familiar conversations with him?" These are the questions which puzzle and perplex, and which often are a means of misleading, those who want to be right and to do right at any cost. And these questions are easily answered in the light of the principles already considered.

How you *ought to feel* is of more importance than how you *do feel*. If it be your unmistakable duty to feel that the character and conduct of another should have your manifest condemnation, then, indeed, you ought to show that feeling accordingly; but in showing that feeling, you ought also to show another phase of your feelings, or you will fail to be and to seem your true self. A judge on the bench, when he sentences a pris-

oner to the gallows, adds the tender and sympathetic words, "And may God have mercy on your soul!" You ought not to be less kindly and considerate toward one whom you condemn, than is a just magistrate toward a convicted murderer. If, however, you are for the moment swayed by unkind or unjust feelings, you certainly have a duty to battle against those feelings without making known the fact of your battling. In order to be your true self at your best, under such circumstances, you need to repress and control all impulses which are not in the direction of your best self.

If you dislike some qualities in a person, while you recognize other qualities in him as commendable, you ought to feel the force of his good side as truly as you do of his bad side. To show him your dislike of that which you disapprove, without showing him, with like clearness, your approval of that which you can commend, would be to misrepresent your real feelings with reference to him. Hence, in such a case, to be yourself,

as you commonly count being yourself, would be to show another self than your own self. Sincerity, so far, would be insincerity. The main question for you to put to yourself, in every such instance, is this: "How ought I to feel toward this person, in view of his and my relations toward our common Father, and in view of the providences that have brought us together just here?" The answer to this question will indicate to you how you ought to seem to feel.

To be other than one's best and truest self is not to be one's self. To seem other than one's best and truest self is to misrepresent one's self. To seem to have less of kindness of heart, or less of generous appreciation of another's best qualities, than is in one's best and truest nature, is to seem to be other than one's realest self. Hence comes the danger, that, in seeking to be ourselves, we shall fail of being ourselves,—as the followers and representatives of Him whose we are and whom we serve.

### III.

#### *GIVING OTHERS DUE DEFERENCE.*

---

It has been rightly said that Paul was the choicest specimen of the true Christian gentleman. And it might be also said, that nowhere in the world are the principles and precepts of true politeness so clearly expressed as in the writings of Paul. Even if one cared for nothing beyond the life that now is, and wished no more than to appear well before his fellows, he could not do better than to note carefully the directions which Paul gives to Christians concerning their personal intercourse with other Christians, and with the world at large. Apart from their profounder spiritual meaning, many of the writings of Paul teach the basis and the bounds of courtesy with unerring accuracy; and no courtly gentleman or refined lady can fail of conformity to Paul's injunctions on this subject

without falling short of the proper standards of politeness.

Paul's exhibit of the power and beauty of Christian love, in the thirteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians, has been often pointed to as a description of refined courtesy; that courtesy without which all other qualities in man or woman fail to win the hearts of others, and which "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." A similar view might fairly be taken of Paul's words to the Philippian Christians, where he urges them to be on the plane of Christ-like courtesy, "doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you," he says, "to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others."

This injunction is by no means to be limited to a demand for unattainable humility and self-forgetfulness on the part of a Christian believer; it actually prescribes the unvarying

duty of the true gentleman and the true lady in all social and business intercourse, in or out of the Church of Christ. The highest courtesy is sure to recognize the relative superiority of every person with whom one has to do, in that person's immediate sphere; not merely the equality, but for the time being the superiority, of that person. And just here is where so many, who would fain be counted refined and courteous, prove themselves lacking in true gentility.

All admit that they are bound to give deference to those who are unmistakably their superiors; but not all are ready to admit that everybody with whom they are brought into social intercourse or personal relations is their superior. In fact, there are those who pride themselves on letting it be seen that they do not feel themselves inferior to others, especially to those who are looked up to in the community for their social standing, or their intellect, or their good works, or their acquired possessions of any kind. They want it to be understood that *they* are quite the equals, if

not the superiors, of those whom people generally look up to, and who, perhaps, may be supposed to count themselves decidedly above the average. And in this violation of the precept of Paul such persons inevitably violate a canon of true politeness, and prove to all who observe them that they claim for themselves a position to which they are not fairly entitled.

Indeed, it may safely be said that in no way do persons, even in what are called the better classes of society or the higher walks of life, give surer evidence of their lack of gentility, than by their effort to show that they are not a whit inferior to those who are about them; for whoever has the spirit of courtesy—which is inseparable from true gentility—is sure to be forgetful of self, and thoughtful of others, in all dealings with persons of any station or grade of the world's classifying; above them, below them, or by their side. Those, therefore, who are superior to others, cannot properly think of impressing their superiority on others; while those who want to prove that

they are fully the equals of those with whom they are in converse, merely give prominence to their surely unsuccessful claim.

But how can it be that every one is the superior of every other? And if it is impossible that this should be, why should one of us feel bound to always count himself the inferior? There need be no trouble on this score. Every one *is*, in his time and place, the superior of any one with whom he is brought into any proper relations; hence every one is in a sense our superior, and deserves our courteous recognition as such. If, for example, the President of the United States should stop, on Pennsylvania Avenue, to have a street bootblack polish his boots,—then, for the time being, that bootblack would be the chief actor in the interview. It would be for the bootblack to inform the President where to rest his foot; and it would be for the President to conform to the bootblack's wise suggestion—to put his foot on the bootblack's box, and not on the bootblack's head. And if the President did not show a proper defer-



ence to that bootblack, in the bootblack's sphere and hour, did not indicate by his speech and bearing that he recognized his temporary dependence on the bootblack's skilled service, he would so far show himself to lack one of the essential qualities of the first gentleman of the Republic. If, on the other hand, that bootblack, "drest in a little brief authority," should pride himself on his temporary superiority to the President, and so fail to show due deference—not abject servility, but manly deference—to the Chief Magistrate of the nation, he would evidence his lack of an essential quality of a good bootblack. And so all the way up and down in the social scale of life; each should be prompt to esteem the other better than himself—in the other's fitting and timely sphere.

Those who are most familiar with the ways of the world know, that the truest lady is always the most considerate of her servants, and that the hardest mistress is one who is little, if any, above her servants—and not quite sure that *they* recognize the small difference

there is; also, that the most difficult persons to get along with in ordinary social intercourse are those who are in doubt about their own social standing, or who question whether those about them understand how good a position they deserve. A true gentleman, or a true lady, at a hotel table, is the last person there to make outspoken complaint of the waiters. In any public conveyance, or place of public assembling, the measure of any person's real gentility is quickest shown by the deference given by that person to others there; not by the deference claimed or expected there from others. Indeed, there is no way of commanding deference from others, like rendering deference to others; and there is no way of showing one's superiority to others, like recognizing the superiority which is in others.

Even in the realm of high scholarship this truth has ample illustration; although it might seem that conscious superiority of knowledge would forbid one's recognizing even a local and temporary superiority of another in his

peculiar sphere of research. He who is truly great in his scholarship is, almost invariably, not only modest in his claim of knowledge, but really quick to recognize the probable superiority, at some one point or another, of every person who is sufficiently interested in his subject of study to enter into conversation about it. If it were not for this constant openness to learn, no scholar could retain his pre-eminence in any sphere of knowledge. He must be willing to learn, and must expect to learn, from any and from all; and being a learner from all, it is both his duty and his pleasure to give deference to all—that is, to those from whom he is learning—while they are teaching him.

A gentleman who had given some study to a subject on which President Mark Hopkins had written with his wonted discrimination and power, on meeting that distinguished scholar, introduced the subject in conversation in order to get further light on it. His first remark indicated that it was a theme of thought with him; and at once President

Hopkins was alert, as always, to learn, rather than to display his knowledge. The latter graciously counted the other better than himself, and by his real mental superiority he drew out all he could from his companion; so that the inquirer came away, as he afterwards said, with a half-mortified feeling that somehow President Hopkins had seemed to be learning from him rather than teaching him. And just there President Hopkins admirably exemplified the readiness of the scholar of high attainment to look rather upon the things of others than upon his own possessions, in intercourse with those of very moderate acquirements.

This is a truth that has its important bearings in all the relations of person and person, in every range and sweep of daily life. We ought to count others better than ourselves, in their time and place, and give them deference accordingly. Dignitaries in church and state, the great and the good in the community, pastors, teachers, parents, and the like, clearly demand our courteous deference. So,

also, do those who seem to be dependent upon us; those from whom we make purchases; those who work for us for wages, our children or our neighbor's children, our scholars, and even beggars at our doors, so long as the latter have any vestige of God's image upon them, or stand as those to whom God has given a sacred personality. So, again, do our fellows and peers. It is not for us to show or to feel a superiority to any persons while we are hearing what they have to say, or while we are receiving from them that which they can supply to us. They *are* for the time being our superiors—in their sphere; and we owe it to ourselves, as well as to them, to give them due deference accordingly.

It would be well if all of us bore in mind this duty of deeming others better than ourselves, in every time of discussion—private or public discussion. No matter how confident we are that we are right and the other wrong, or that we are fully informed and the other ignorant, if we have consented to discuss the

matter at all, we must concede to our opponent his superiority while he is having his say on the subject. He is not merely to be counted by us as a peer; he is, just then, while he is giving his view of the case, our superior, better than ourselves; and our every word and look should show that we recognize his superiority so far. What a gain there would be in all the conversations and discussions of Christians, if only this clearly defined principle in Christian courtesy were faithfully adhered to! There are those who seem to act upon it unvaryingly, and they are beloved and respected by all who know them. They prove their own superiority by their conceding superiority to others. There are, on the other hand, those who continually slight or ignore this principle; and whatever good qualities such persons possess, their lack at this point gives them a lack of dignity and of attractiveness in the sight of all observers. They prove their inferiority by their constant claim of superiority.

The element of reverence enters into the

spirit of all true courtesy; for reverence manifests itself not alone toward God, but toward all who on any account are worthy of respect and deference. Hence he who is truly reverent will show respect and give deference to those who might seem to be below him, as well as to those who are obviously above him; since there is no inferior who is not, in his time and place, a superior. Reverence works both ways alike. This it is that makes quick and hearty obedience to authority indispensable to the character of one who can command. He who chafes under authority could never have success if in authority. A lack of due respect for those over him proves an inability to give due respect to those under him. He who is not prompt and cheerful to follow, when following is in order, will never be fitted to lead when the time for leading has come.

He, moreover, who has already reached a plane where he thinks he is quite as high as those about him, is not likely to rise any higher; nor does he deserve to rise. A sense of the superiority of those with whom one has

to do—their superiority in their several spheres—is vastly more of an incentive to noble being and doing than any sense of one's own pre-eminence could prove. This it is which is the soul of all true gallantry; a promptness to give hearty deference to those who are worthy of deference because of their peculiar and distinctive high qualities. To lose the sense that one with whom we have to do is better than ourselves in that one's sphere of thought and speech and action, is to destroy our power of impressing that one with a sense that we are the better of the two even in our sphere; and it is to limit our endeavor to rise to a higher level than we have yet reached.

To esteem others better than ourselves is, in fact, a necessity, in order to our being fair toward others, in order to our being just toward ourselves, in order to our showing ourselves at our best, and in order to our obeying the inspired injunction concerning the claims and the scope of Christian courtesy. And this Christian courtesy, which is so essential



and so far-reaching, is not of blood, but of spirit; not of nature, but of grace. It is not a thing which is born in us, but it is a thing to be watchfully and prayerfully developed and nurtured, in the training of our children, and in the exercising and constraining of our personal characteristics and our methods of personal conduct.

#### IV.

### *THE DUTY OF RIGHT FEELING TOWARD OTHERS.*

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A great many persons recognize and emphasize the duty of a kindly considerateness of speech and manner toward others. A great many other persons recognize and emphasize the duty of frankness and sincerity of speech and manner toward others. Some give exceptional prominence to one of these duties, and some give exceptional prominence to the other. Some are so desirous of seeming kindly considerate of others that they are ready to speak or to act insincerely rather than to give pain even to those who are personally distasteful to them. Others, again, are so desirous of being absolutely sincere in all their action, that they will bear themselves toward all with a frankness of manner and speech which can-

not but give discomfort and unhappiness to many.

The one sort say: "I must give chief thought to the feelings of others. I cannot say that which will cause them pain." The other sort say: "I must be sincere. However it may affect myself or others, I must act out my convictions." Between these two extremes, which are held so positively by the one class and the other, many persons vacillate, or oscillate, in troubled perplexity. They want to be considerate, and they want to be sincere. They would fain have the best results of both phases of duty, without neglecting either. And, as a matter of fact, this is a possibility, if only they are influenced by right feeling toward others,—as they ought to be, and as they might be.

If, indeed, one were always swayed by a feeling of considerate regard for another's welfare, and were never lacking in sympathy with him in his personal life and in his individual tastes and needs, it is obvious that he might at any time speak and act with abso-

lute sincerity in his intercourse with that person, without the slightest fear of causing him discomfort by his words or by his ways. When our hearts are full of love for another, and when our feelings toward him are those of unqualified admiration, the franker we are in our speech and manner, the more evident is the proof of our kindliness of intention. Our only fear then—if fear we have—is lest our innermost thoughts and our sincerest convictions with reference to that friend shall fail of being recognized by him just as they are. There is no conflict in such a case between our duty of seeming kindly and our duty of being sincere. The two duties have merged themselves in the all-inclusive sway of a loving purpose with reference to him toward whom we have a loving feeling—which is the right feeling toward everybody.

Love is a duty. Love to God is man's first great duty. Love to his fellow is man's second great duty. The Bible is explicit on this point; but, although this is recognized as a Bible-teaching, it is not accepted in

practical life as covering all the ground which the Bible assigns to it. "He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law," says Paul. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law." The Old Testament and the New are at one in this teaching. Moses and Jesus both declare it. Yet the duty of loving everybody is not commonly reckoned as binding on us all in the same literalness as the duty of refraining from murdering anybody, or as the duty of being honest and truthful toward all.

It is easy to love those whom we do love. We are glad to love them. Apart from any question of mere duty, we are ready to keep on loving them, and to show our love for them. But those whom we do not love, how can we love *them*? How can our affections be changed or swayed by our wills, and under a sense of bald duty? How can we bring ourselves to be drawn toward those whose characters are repellent to us, and whose spirit and conduct we cannot but disapprove or condemn? How can we love the unlov-

able, even when love toward them is recognized as a bounden duty? These are questions which confront us when we face the fact of our duty of right feeling; and they are questions which are commonly deemed so unanswerable as to be practical barriers to all progress in that direction of duty. But the duty of right feeling, and of that love which is right feeling, is, nevertheless, a duty that is as practicable as it is imperative.

Right feeling toward all, which is a feeling of love toward all, is not a matter of fitful emotion. On the contrary, it is an attitude of being into which one is brought by an appreciative sense of the facts in the case. "To feel" is "to perceive by the touch." Whether the "feeling" be physical, mental, or spiritual, its origin and tendency are practically the same. In the one case or in the other, feeling comes of touching, and so of being touched; and the tendency of this sense of touching and of being touched is to change one's attitude toward that which he touches or by which he is touched. One's attitude

toward another cannot but be affected through one's being newly touched by an added sense of danger, of gratitude, of admiration, of abhorrence, in connection with that other's character or conduct. Right feeling is the feeling which is proper as a result of one's sensitive contact with the life which one touches, or by which one is touched; and that *such* feeling is both a duty and a possibility, who would question?

Suppose, for example, you had a strong dislike to a certain man in view of what you knew of his personal qualities and his mode of life, and had resolved on showing him just what you thought of him by explicit words to him, or by marked coldness of manner toward him. Suppose that, while you were watching your opportunity of exhibiting this sincerity of your feeling in his case, he were bravely to imperil his life in your behalf, or in behalf of your loved child, and were to be maimed or scarred in his heroic endeavor at your rescue or at the preservation of your darling.

Would that make no difference in your state of feeling toward that man? Would you speak to him just as harshly, or bear yourself toward him just as coldly, as if you had not been newly touched by a sense of his unlooked-for nobleness of nature? Or, again, if you did feel very differently toward him on this account, would that show that your feelings were mere fitful emotions, with no basis in sound judgment, and under no control of unvarying principle? Would not your change of feeling toward him be a reasonable one, and one perfectly consistent with your former estimate of the right or the wrong of the conduct which had swayed you in your course toward him? Might you not, even now, show him, when occasion offered, that you did not approve of that which was unworthy of him, while you were full of kindness toward him because of his higher and better self as now understood by you?

Suppose, again, that you were estranged from one with whom you had been on terms



of friendly intimacy, and that you had a sense of personal grievance through some misunderstanding, or through an unmistakable difference of opinion in matters of importance between yourself and him. Suppose that, while you were resolved to stand firm by your own convictions of right, even though you must permanently break with your old associate, you were suddenly, on turning a street corner, to come upon the prostrate form of that very person stricken down by an accident, and you were to see his upturned face full of signs of intense personal suffering, and were sure that he was rapidly breathing his life away in agony, would your feelings toward him undergo no change in consequence?

Would you give the same prominence as before to the differences that had separated you from him? Would you be lacking in hearty sincerity if you were then to speak to him in truest tenderness of sympathy? And if, with his dying breath, he were to ask your honest opinion of the points which had

brought about the estrangement, could you not now be both frank and kindly in your expression of your personal convictions on that subject, because of your now right attitude toward him, through your now right feelings with reference to him?

Suppose, yet once more, that one whom you had viewed with simple indifference, or on whom you had looked with a sense of derision, were found, all unexpectedly to yourself, to be the loved child or the prized attendant of your best and dearest earthly friend. Suppose you were newly to realize that the heart of that friend whom you loved as you loved your own life was literally bound up with the welfare of this unattractive person whom you had slighted or derided, and that in no other way could you so truly serve your friend of friends as by giving honest help and hearty sympathy to this his representative. Would this new conception of the representative character of the before unwelcome person have no effect upon your feelings toward that person? Would it now be

necessary for you to be insincere, and to be lacking in real frankness, in order that you might make a show of kindly considerateness toward him who stands transfigured in the reflected light of him who sways your heart more surely than he sways his own? Would not a change of your feelings toward this representative of your friend be a duty, as well as be a natural consequence of the discovery which has changed your attitude toward him? And as it would be in this case, would it not be in every similar case?

Do not these illustrations of the causes which control and which change our feelings toward those whose lives we touch on earth, through our correspondent change of attitude toward those persons, find their application so widely as practically to include all persons with whom we come in social contact? There is a nobler side to every nature than is shown in that side which immediately repels us; and we are always liable to be under larger personal obligations to any human fellow than at present we may per-

ceive. We should therefore at least be in that attitude toward every neighbor which is consistent with the possibility of such a recognition of unlooked-for nobleness on his side, and of unexpected indebtedness on ours.

Every human heart is suffering, even now, more keenly than another can realize. Every associate and fellow of ours is already near to death. Our next word to him may be our last word. It behooves us to act and to speak, even where we must act and speak in sign of conscientious disapproval, in that spirit of kindly tenderness which would be not unseemly to a dying sufferer. Yet more, every human being is one of God's representatives. With all his weaknesses, with all his faults and follies, and with all his sins, he is dear to God. For him the blood of the Son of God was shed. All doing for him and all bearing with him on our part in loving tenderness, because of his representative character, will be recognized by God as a proof of our loving devotedness to Himself.

Even the coming to us of one from whom

we shrink is, in a sense, the coming of one of God's messengers. Whether that messenger comes to lead us or to test us, it is our duty to treat him, and to feel toward him, as we ought to treat, and as we ought to feel toward, a messenger of God. If we feel toward him in that way, whether we follow his counsel or whether we reject it, whether we approve his personal conduct or whether we condemn it, we shall have a right feeling toward him, and we shall exhibit it; and to have and to show such a right feeling is our duty invariably.

"Dark is the glass through which we see each other;  
    We may not judge a brother.  
We see only the rude and outer strife;  
    God knows the inner life.  
Where we our voice in condemnation raise,  
    God may see fit to praise;  
And those from whom, like Pharisees, we shrink,  
    With Christ may eat and drink."

## V.

### *HOW TO SHOW AN INTEREST IN OTHERS.*

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In order to *show* an interest in others, it is essential, first, to *have* an interest in others. And if, indeed, one has an interest in another so real, and so deep, and so pervading, as to control his feelings and thoughts and purposes with reference to that other, the showing of his interest will be easy enough. There is no need, in such a case, of any study of methods by which to make the prevailing interest manifest. But it is when one's interest in another is a recognized duty, rather than a spontaneous impulse, that the question becomes a serious one, How can an enforced interest in another be both cultivated and expressed? And, as a matter of fact, there are few questions in the realm of practical Christian conduct which are of wider

reach and of more general application than just this question.

It may be that we ought to have an interest in another because he is newly our next-door neighbor, or because he shares our pew in church, or because he sits next us at a dinner-table, or because we have some business relations with him, or because he is closely linked with some one who is dear to us, or because he has some peculiar need to which we should minister, or because he is brought under our charge in a Sunday-school class, or in a district we are canvassing for some good cause. It may be that our interest in another is a duty simply because he is a fellow-mortal,—one for whom our Saviour died, one who is commended to our loving attention by that Saviour, and one to whom we ought to exhibit illustratively that Saviour's surpassing love.

All this may make the duty of an interest plain, but it does not make plain the method by which we can cultivate and exhibit the interest which is our duty. And just here it

is that many a person feels a peculiar lack in the power to have and to show an interest in one with whom there seems little or nothing in common as a bond of sympathy. Yet, as a matter of fact, a larger share of all the loving interest in others which is shown by those who are counted exceptionally capable of an easy familiarity with all whom they meet, is the result of special effort on their part in the line of a peculiar training; and their methods of work in this line are worthy of careful noting. Indeed, it is those persons who found it hardest by nature to show an interest in others generally, who, as a rule, are most successful in such an interest-showing.

Of course, if there are any obvious points of similarity in circumstances, or in former experiences, between ourselves and one in whom we are newly called to show an interest, those points are to be first made available as a means of coming into a measure of sympathy with that person; for it is at points of agreement, rather than of difference, that fellowship between any two persons must have



its start. If the new-comer is from a region of country where we formerly lived, or is a fellow-alumnus with us of a well-known institution of learning, or was in a line of business in which we were once engaged, or is at present in an occupation like our own, or is in peculiar relations to one to whom we are attached, or is known to be interested in outside pursuits which have a charm to us,—in such a case the bond of sympathy is already found. All that then is necessary is for us to recognize that bond, and diligently to pursue the acquaintance accordingly. But it is when the other person is wholly unlike ourselves, perhaps of the opposite sex, and of a widely different sphere of life, with no tastes or pursuits in common with us, and with habits of thought and objects of desire as far removed from our own as possible,—then it is that the question has peculiar force, How can I feel and show the interest here which I ought to have, and which I want to show?

Ordinarily, we look *within* for a suggestion of wise means of an exhibit of kindly sym-

pathy. We naturally ask ourselves how *we* should feel if we were situated like the one to whom our attention is now called, for this show of personal interest; and we are inclined to do as we would be done by. But there is a limit to the power to be attained in this way. There are those who, under certain circumstances, would feel just as we should feel; and, again, there are those who, under precisely the same circumstances, would feel very differently from ourselves. To be guided, therefore, by our own sense of need in every exhibit of sympathetic interest in others, would, in many an instance, lead us astray.

Here it is that there comes the necessity of studying those in whom we ought to have and to show an interest, instead of expecting to find out their needs by studying our own thoughts and feelings, in an imagined correspondence of position with theirs. Not what *we* should like and should want, but what *they* like and want, is the real measure of their present need; and that is to be learned by a study of them as they are, not by a study of

ourselves as we are. And many, very many, make the mistake of their lives, as loving-hearted well-doers, just here.

A group of mission-school teachers were counseling together with the sagacious and warm-hearted city missionary in charge of their field, over the methods of household visiting among the families of their scholars. "I'm ready enough to visit," said a young lady teacher; "but when I get into one of those tenement-house homes, I don't know what to talk about, to begin with." "Why, talk about the best way of boiling cabbage!" was the abrupt and pithy response of the dear old city missionary; and the whole philosophy of this matter of having and showing an interest in others was in that reply. The last thing in the world that that young lady would naturally have thought of for a subject of conversation, was the best thing in the world for her to open a conversation with, in one of those mission homes to which she was going as if to another universe than her own. Boiled cabbage was a staple article of food in those

homes. She knew nothing about it in her home. If she spoke of almost anything in which she already had a personal interest, she would be speaking as in an unknown tongue to them. But if she spoke of that in which they of those homes already had an interest, she was on their plane, touching them from the start at a point of personal sympathy. And before she could visit in one of those homes to best advantage, she would need to study cabbage-boiling, and to be able to question and to answer questions about that. Here is an illustration of the principle on which the best work in this realm of Christian service can alone be done efficiently.

A lawyer, having an important case committed to his professional care which involved the details of the book-binding business, actually went, in advance of the trial, to a large book-bindery, and worked at the benches, from one department to another, until he had sufficiently mastered a knowledge of the business to enable him to cross-question the witnesses in the case more intelligently than

would otherwise have been possible. Nor is that instance an exceptional one among professional men who are successful in the line of special practice. It is much the same with the politician who is seeking votes, and with the Sunday-school missionary who is canvassing a neighborhood in the hope of awakening an interest in Sunday-school work by first winning the interest of all in himself as a Sunday-school worker. Either of these workers knows enough to study carefully those in whom he would show an interest, instead of resting on his personal experience as a means of judging their personal feelings. And this was Paul's way, indeed, of studying the Isthmian games at Corinth, and the armor and the manner of the Roman soldier at Rome, in order to make an evangelistic use of figures of speech which would have a force in the heathen mind beyond any of the figures Paul had learned in the school of Gamaliel.

This, again, is the way of some who are counted peculiarly easy in their manner of adapting themselves to all whom they meet,

but who have won their power by hard work, against their natural inclinations, and who retain that power only by continued effort in its timely exercise. They have studied womanly methods of thought and feeling, as over against the manly methods, by the reading of the best portraiture of woman by various women writers as well as those by men. They have watched the ways of children as children, in order to understand children, and to adapt themselves intelligently to children. They have informed themselves, from time to time, of the different subjects of society conversation, or of the more prominent themes of general popular interest, outside of their own sphere of personal life; and whether they find themselves at a place of summer resort, or at a church sociable, or at a market-place, they deliberately consider their companions of the hour, and adapt their conversation to them, as if they were doing it spontaneously.

Nor are these men mere society lovers, or seekers after the reputation of universal friendliness. Often it is by a mental wrench that

they break away from their personal absorption in congenial thought or occupation, and strive unselfishly to conform themselves to the tastes and needs of others as a means of well doing in the world. And if they are thus all things to all, in order that they may by all things rightly represent their Master, and win to his loving service, they are more than justified in this endeavor to have and to show a kindly interest in their fellows.

Having a knowledge of others is not in itself having an interest in others; and it is an interest in others, not a knowledge of others, that it is our duty to have and to show. In order to show an interest in others, we must, for the time being, be absolutely forgetful of ourselves. We must think only of those in whom we are showing our interest. Our eyes must be theirs; our ears must be theirs; our whole attention must be theirs. Listlessness in such a case is hardly less than insulting. They must see, as they look at us, that just now we are, in a sense, living only for them; that whatever interests them, has an interest

to us, because it has an interest to them. And we must be even readier to show an interest in what *they* tell us about themselves, than to show an interest in what *we* tell them about themselves. What they say to us about themselves quickens their interest in us, and strengthens their confidence in us, more than anything that we can say to them about ourselves or themselves.

An experienced army chaplain used to say, that when he could get a soldier to bring out from his knapsack his little card-photograph album, and show the pictures of mother or sister, of wife or child, he felt sure of him. The chaplain's interest in the soldier had then an opportunity of showing itself beyond mistake. And this is a truth that runs through every sphere of social intercourse. In order to show your interest effectively in another, you must show your interest in what that other has to say about himself, or about that which already has an interest to him.

If, indeed, we were influenced by selfish considerations only, we should do wisely by



having a constant care to show a kindly interest in others; for if we show no interest in others, others will have no interest in us; and by showing an interest in others we win the interest of others in ourselves. But apart from all selfish considerations, it is our duty to have and to show an interest in others; and this duty, like every other duty, calls for self-forgetfulness, for careful study, and for hard and persistent endeavor.

## VI.

### *SENSITIVENESS AS A MEASURE OF POWER.*

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Personal sensitiveness is generally looked upon as a source of weakness, and its exceptional possession is generally supposed to limit, if not to destroy, its possessor's power of achievement as well as of enjoyment. Yet, as a matter of fact, personal sensitiveness is also a source of peculiar strength; and its exceptional possession may be—whether in a given case it is so or not—a means of high achievement on the part of its possessor, while increasing his power of giving help and enjoyment to others.

The world's opinion on this point is indicated in the frequency of such expressions as, "He is too sensitive," "She is too sensitive," "You are too sensitive." And one of the standard lexicons of to-day voices the popu-

lar feeling when it gives, as an illustrative suggestion of the place of sensitiveness among human faculties, the statement that "the most sensible men are the least sensitive." Many a person, holding this estimate of sensitiveness, says of himself or herself, "I know I am too sensitive;" or, "I know that a great deal of my unhappiness comes from my being so very sensitive. I am sorry for it, but then my sensitiveness is my chief weakness."

The whole aim of Booddhism, indeed, which just now has such a strange popularity among English-speaking peoples, is to exterminate sensitiveness; and its highest conception of ideal blessedness is a state of existence in which sensitiveness is an impossibility. Its underlying argument is, that in proportion to our sensitiveness is our liability to suffer; therefore a lack of sensibility is desirable as bringing to us entire freedom from suffering. The premises of Booddhism, that our measure of sensitiveness is the measure of our liability to suffer, are certainly correct; but it by no means follows that we should be the gainers

if we were to lessen in any degree our capacity for suffering; and here is where the world's opinion, that he who is most sensible is least sensitive, is rightly to be challenged.

"Sensitiveness," like "sensitivity," is a peculiar acuteness of the senses; it is a peculiar susceptibility to impressions through the senses. Sensitiveness, therefore, must, in the nature of things, give larger possibilities of power, even though it gives, also, larger possibilities of discomfort and peril. In this regard it is with the mechanism of man's personality as with all material mechanism; the more sensitive the machine, the greater its possibilities in the direction of its best using, and the greater its liability to derangement and to misuse. In the weighing of gold, as the standard of earth's values; and in the weighing of drugs and chemicals, on the use of which depends the safety of human lives,—there are employed balances so sensitive as to turn at the weight of one fifteen-hundredth part of a grain. Standard balances which will weigh with unerring accuracy a

thousand ounces are so sensitive as to turn at the impression of the bodily warmth of a man standing near one of their arms. Such balances are, indeed, peculiarly liable to derangement and disorder; but, notwithstanding this, it is the measure of their sensitiveness which is the measure of their power in the immediate line of their use and value. In the barometer, in the thermometer, in the tasimeter, in the chronograph, and in the phonograph, it is the measure of sensitiveness which is the measure of the instrument's power. And who would ask that the magnetic needle should be less sensitive than it is, while he is dependent on that sensitiveness for his safe guidance across the ocean to the haven of his seeking?

As with inanimate mechanism, so with the mechanism of animate life; its possibility of power is proportioned to its measure of sensitiveness, all the way up the scale of being from the lowest grade of the zoöphyte to the highest grade of civilized man. The oyster is sometimes taken as the type of an absolutely

unsensitive equanimity; yet the very oyster's grandest power is in that measure of its sensitiveness which causes its life to go out into the making of a priceless pearl. Nor is this measure of animate power to be undervalued because of its correspondent increase of liability to suffering and danger. As Trench has it:

"The oyster sickens while the pearl doth substance win,  
Thank God for pains that prove a noble growth within."

And even though, as Cowper says, it is true that

"A kick that scarce would move a horse  
May kill a sound divine,"

there are few who would think that a clergyman would gain power as a clergyman by having a like lack of sensibility with a horse. Cowper himself was inclined to this latter opinion, and he said:

"'Twere better to be born a stone,  
Of ruder shape and feeling none,  
Than with a tenderness like mine,  
And sensibilities so fine."

But Cowper's work in the world while he lived, and his place in history afterward, were a result of his "sensibilities so fine," which gave him such personal discomfort as to make him wish he were without them.

"Sensitiveness" is, after all, only an intensification of "sense." The man of sense is the man who is keenly sensitive to his environments, to his opportunities, to his duties, and to the feelings and needs of his fellows, and who bears himself wisely in view of all that his sensitiveness discloses to him. No man can be sensible, therefore, without a full measure of sensibility, or sensitiveness. Burke said of the statesman and the legislator: "The true lawgiver ought to have a heart full of "sensibility;" he who would legislate for others must feel with others. And as it is in this sphere of human influence and action, so it is in every other; only he who is exceptionally sensitive to his surroundings can have exceptional power in ministry to, or in sway over, those who are within the sweep of his surroundings. To be lacking in sensitiveness

is to be lacking in the data which sensitiveness supplies to a man as the basis of his sensible action. To that degree in which he has sensitiveness, and to that degree only, can a man have that knowledge of others which will enable him to enter into their feelings, and to move them through the interplay of his and their sympathies.

Of course, a larger degree of sympathy with others involves a larger degree of suffering on one's own part. He who has little of sensitiveness, knows little of suffering; and he who knows little of suffering can have or can show little of sympathy with those who suffer. Hence it is that he who has greatest power of sympathy, and who is most effective in his ministry of sympathy, is sure to be one who has greatest power of suffering, and who has been caused to endure severest experiences of peculiar suffering. It is, in fact, his exceptional power of suffering in his own nature that gives any man an exceptional power of sympathy with other sufferers. It is in his excessive sensitiveness for himself



and for others, that his power of having and of showing feeling in behalf of others lies. That excessive sensitiveness enables him to image from his own experience the physical or mental suffering of another, which is beyond the comprehension of one less sensitive than himself. Thus it is that

“Where bright imagination reigns,  
The fine-wrought spirit feels acuter pains;  
Where glow exalted sense and taste refined,  
There keener anguish rankles in the mind:  
There feeling is diffused in every part,  
Thrills in each nerve, and lives in all the heart;  
And those whose gen'rous souls each tear would keep  
From other's eyes, are born themselves to weep.”

The power of enjoyment, like the power of suffering, is measured by the measure of one's personal sensitiveness. An acute sensibility to outside impressions is as sure to intensify one's capacity for pleasure as for pain. While it is true that

“The heart that is soonest awake to the flowers  
Is always the first to be touched by the thorns,”  
it is also true that the heart that is readiest

to weep with those who weep is readiest to rejoice with those who rejoice, and that the keenest conceivable sense of delight is known only to those whose capacity for, and whose experience of, sorrow and suffering, is beyond that of their fellows generally. If, indeed, they were not as exceptionally sensitive to pain and discomfort as they are, these persons could never be so exceptionally capable of pleasure and joy.

Sensitiveness is a measure of power; but sensitiveness is not in itself power, nor is it the measure of all power. Sensitiveness is not the best qualification for every hard service on the lower plane of life. The sensitiveness of the standard gold scales is not needed for the weighing of coal, or of iron ore; nor is the sensitiveness of the ship's compass desirable in a ship's anchor. Sensitiveness is a barrier to equanimity of feeling; and, as a rule, a person of a highly sensitive organization is more likely to suffer intensely than to enjoy keenly in life, as life is. But the highest measure of unselfish power for

others is possible only as a result or as an accompaniment of exceptional sensitiveness; and he who regrets that, in his efforts to be of service to others, his exceeding sensitiveness often causes him exceeding pain, must understand that if he were less sensitive to the feelings and the needs, and to the looks, words, and ways, of others, he would have less power as a source of help and of cheer and of good to others. The measure of a man's sensitiveness is the measure of his power of sympathy; and the measure of a man's power of sympathy is the measure of his power for good to his fellows.

## VII.

### *TOUCHING OTHERS AT THE POINT OF SYMPATHY.*

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A remark ascribed to Lord Beaconsfield is of equal value in illustration of an important principle in the art of influencing others, whether it be true or false in fact. The Earl is said to have replied to the inquiry how he maintained his influence with Queen Victoria, "Why, I never dispute her; and I sometimes forget." In the suggestion here given of the importance of avoiding subjects of difference, as far as is possible, in all efforts at bringing others to our way of thinking, there is a reminder of the truth that there is a positive gain in touching others at the point of sympathy rather than at the point of disagreement, whether we have much or little in common with them, and whether they are stronger willed or weaker than ourselves.

Touching others at the point of sympathy in order to avoid unnecessary collision with them, or in order to carry them along with us, is a very different matter from a spiritless and flabby agreement with others because we have no positive opinions of our own, or because we shrink from being at issue with anybody on account of our opinions. Wisdom and adroitness in methods of carrying our point with those who differ with us are quite consistent with independence of thought and with the courage of one's convictions.

The writer once heard a distinguished and eminently successful lawyer give a lesson in this line out of his professional experience somewhat as follows: "You know that in every case before a jury a lawyer must win every man of his real audience, or his efforts go for nothing. If he fails to carry the last of the twelve, he loses his case. It comes, therefore, to be a very important matter to a lawyer to know how to bring men to see a truth as he sees it. And to begin with, a lawyer must know before he commences his

argument just how the jury stands in his case. A good lawyer does know that. If he was watchful as the testimony came in, he could see how each man of the panel received it, and what effect it had on his mind. Standing up before the jury for his argument, the lawyer, perhaps, sees that only one man of the twelve is fairly with him in the case. A second is somewhat inclined to his side. The other ten are of varied degrees of hostility to him and his client.

"Now in this state of things," said the lawyer who was giving this illustration, "it will be of the first importance to me, as an advocate, that I begin my address to the jurymen who agrees with me. If I should start with the jurymen who were on the other side, they would feel that we were over against each other, and would stiffen themselves up to resist my argument. I should see this, and feel it too; my words would rebound on me without accomplishing anything, and I should soon be discouraged in the fruitless battling, so that I and that jury

would never agree. But if I start off with the one who sees the case as I do, he responds with a look of acquiescence and approval. We understand and encourage each other. The current of sympathy flows between us.

"After a little I turn to the man who is half persuaded, and say something that I am sure he will agree to; and he shows me that he does so. Just then I see that one or two of the others are ready to accept *that* statement, and I emphasize it before them. Turning back to my first ally, I speak more positively to him—or with him—on the subject; and we are glad together over the progress we are making. By and by I have two or three on my side. We get on nicely together. There is more of agreement between us than was suspected at the start. Still I give the first place to points of agreement rather than to those of disagreement, occasionally dropping a word of argument concerning a point where we have been at variance, but where it would seem we hardly

need to differ any longer. In this way asperities are softened; harmonies are brought into prominence; the current of sympathy swells and grows, until by and by it carries the more reluctant of the jurymen, like driftwood, into the rushing stream; and I and the twelve jurymen are of the same opinion on the vital point at issue—the verdict."

It is by no means in diplomacy alone, or in addressing a jury, that one can best win others by touching them first at the point of sympathy. The same principle applies in every sphere of life. Men who were on opposite sides in the civil war are frequently meeting each other nowadays. If they should always begin by a discussion of the issues which brought on that war, they would neither meet nor part as friends. But if one of them says at the start, "Well, at all events, you and I were true to our convictions, and were ready to defend them to the death," there is a bond of soldierly sympathy between those two men instantly recognized, and likely to hold them in



agreement on many points where otherwise they would have differed.

It is the same in religious matters. Suppose, for example, that you, as a Protestant, find yourself in company for a journey with a Roman Catholic. You can begin a conversation by asking him how he can worship saints, or kneel before images, or believe in a church that sells indulgences. With that beginning you and he will hardly find yourselves in hearty agreement on any subject for the next few hours.

If, on the other hand, you begin conversation with the indisputable statement that his church has had some glorious good men in it, and then add that you particularly enjoy the writings of the godly Fenelon, and of the sweet-spirited Faber, you will open the way for a comparison of many opinions of common value to you two; and if you are to influence that man at all to your way of thinking, you will have made a decided gain by first touching him at this point of sympathy, instead of bringing

into fresh prominence the points of your disagreement with him. This base-line of method in intercourse applies equally well to the discussion of questions of politics, of finance, of social science, and of aught else where men differ in much, but are sure to have some point of agreement or sympathy. The poorest way of trying to influence a man to see a truth as you do, is by forcing him at the start to put himself over against you for a contest, instead of alongside of you for a conference. Is not this truth an obvious one? Yet how commonly it is ignored in the experiences of every-day life!

Indeed, the most important practical bearing of this truth is on the ordinary relations of life, in the family, and in the intercourse of friends. No two persons who are really good for anything are in agreement at all points. For them to expect absolute sympathy in every thought and feeling is as unreasonable as for them to look for unvarying likeness in their expressions of feeling. As Mrs. Browning protests:

"Accuse me not, beseech thee, that I wear  
Too calm and sad a face in front of thine;  
For we two look two ways, and cannot shine  
With the same sunlight on our brow and hair."

Hence for husband and wife, for brother and sister, for friend and friend, to emphasize the points of their dissimilarity and variance, and to dwell sadly upon the fact that in these things they cannot agree, is a sure source of permanent discomfort to both, and of growing inharmony between them. Of this spirit Spenser says:

"It is not love, but a discordant war,  
Whose unlike parts amongst themselves do jar."

But, on the other hand, there are to be found, indeed, few persons,—none, surely, who are in the same family, or who call themselves friends—who have not much in common; who have not many points of both similarity and sympathy. If these points are recognized and emphasized in daily intercourse, their power increases day by day, and the differences are lost sight of, or are swept away in the growing flood of joyous harmo-

nies. It is not when we are reminded by a loved one of our well-known lack in some particular, or when that loved one recalls to us an undeniable error or blunder of a former day, that our hearts glow with grateful affection, and go out with glad sympathy toward the one who has clearly understood us so far; but it is when he speaks approvingly of some quality which we know he has seen in us, or when he discourses with enthusiasm of a theme which is in the line of our peculiar tastes and affections, that

“Some chord in unison with what we hear  
Is touched within us, and the heart replies.”

In this realm as in others it is true, that “whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he thinketh he hath.” The recognition of existing sympathy is an earnest of increasing sympathy; while the ignoring of supposed sympathy is the death-knell of that sympathy which might have been recognized. Not he who is always showing us that he and we are not at one,—

whatever may be the cause of our difference,  
—but he who so touches us at the point of  
sympathy that we forget we ever did or could  
have a difference with him, is the one to win  
our hearts, and to sway our thoughts and  
feelings “at his own sweet will.”

## VIII.

### *HELPING OR HURTING BY A WORD.*

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After all, one's chief work in the world is liable to be done in an incidental or a casual way, rather than deliberately, in the line of his principal endeavor. We commonly help, or we hurt, others more by our instinctive expressions of feeling, in hearty or in heartless personal words to individuals, than by our resolute and thoughtful efforts to assist the good or to oppose the evil in a larger sphere, and on an extended scale. And a reason for this greater power of our lesser labor is to be found in our failure to appreciate the possibilities of a casually spoken word, and our proneness to overestimate the worth of our well-considered activities and exertions.

The truth is, that no human being ever

risks above—or ever falls below (if that term be preferred)—the possibility of being influenced by a personal word of sympathy or of rebuke, and of being measurably uplifted or depressed by such evidences of the approval or the disapproval of his fellow-men. He may have official station, social position, fame, popularity, wealth, friends, in such fullness of degree as to seem to put *him* beyond the possibility of being helped or hurt by a word; but so long as he has a heart, that heart can be touched by a single expression of loving or grateful interest in himself personally, or stung by an unmistakable assurance of the hostility or dislike of any one person whom he knows.

There is always a certain vagueness, to a man's own mind, in his general reputation, and in the implied commendation which his success, as a whole, in his peculiar sphere, can give to him; but there is a reality which no man can question in the face-to-face word of a brother man. And when the latter has come home to him, the former is in a sense

forgotten out of mind. The word that *is*, is, for the time being, more potent than all the words that *might be*.

It would not be easy to name a man more thoroughly self-centered and self-reliant than Napoleon Bonaparte. And yet it is a matter of history that, while yet a subaltern struggling with difficulties and suffering for lack of sympathy, he turned from life in despair, and was on the very point of suicide. As he was gloomily finding his way to the river's bank in the dusk of the evening, he was met by a kind-hearted physician, who was attracted by the soldier's manner, and moved to speak a cheery word to him. That word led Napoleon to open his heart to his new-found friend, and the result was a change of purpose—with all its vast consequences to humanity. Waiving the question whether Napoleon's life was of larger gain or of larger loss to the world, can it be doubted that that one kindly word of the warm-hearted physician was more potent in its sphere than any well-planned exertions of



that physician in the realm of his chosen profession?

Long since the days of Napoleon, there was a man of kindly heart and generous spirit, who actually gave his whole self to others in sincere desire to shed light and cheer on those about him. Gradually his health gave way, and finally he became crippled and deformed by disease. He suffered more than others knew, from want of sympathy; yet he was seemingly so calm and unconcerned, that those who would have spoken to him loving words of grateful appreciation, had they fully realized his need, permitted him to hunger for such words hopelessly.

“A face may be woeful-white to cover a heart  
that's aching;  
And a face may be full of light over a heart  
that's breaking!”

Finally, when he had just all that he could bear in the burden of his loneliness, and in the sorrow of his seeming life-failure, that sad-hearted and weary man was passed on the street by a mother and her children.

The children were startled at his peculiar appearance; and the mother, thoughtlessly, spoke out a word of sneer over his deformed person. It was only a word, but it entered his soul like a burning iron. If it had come to this, that he was now only a terror to the little ones on the street, what had he to live for? He turned back to his lonely home. He brooded over that incident. One kindly, approving word might then have saved him. But that word did not come; and in sheer despair he destroyed his own life.

“Lost for want of a word!

A word that you might have spoken.

Who knows what eyes may be dim,

Or what hearts may be aching and broken?”

Nor is it alone in such life and death emergencies as these that a word has power for good or for ill. Your pastor needs a word of thanks from you. Your wife needs more hearty and explicit words of loving praise from you than you are wont to give her. Your children need such words afresh with each new day. So it is with your teacher;

and so it is with your scholars. So, also, with your partner, and so with your clerks, and with your servants. And the more highly favored, and the best loved, of your friends, may even now be suffering from the lack of a few hearty and outspoken words, in expression of the confidence and respect and affection which you do not fail to feel, but which you have not recently felt called upon to give utterance to anew. Now, as in the days of Socrates, "such as thy words are, such will thy affections be esteemed," and now, as always,

"Words of affection, howsoe'er express'd  
The latest spoken still are deemed the best."

And, on the other hand,

"Some syllables are swords."

A thoughtless word of impatience, or of censure, or of criticism, or of seeming indifference to another's interests, may give such pain as you would not willingly inflict upon an enemy, and may be a means of depression and of grief beyond your imaginings.

"The ill-timed truth we might have kept—  
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?  
The word we had not sense to say—  
Who knows how grandly it had rung?"

There are marvelous possibilities in a word of kindness, as there are marvelous possibilities in a tear of sympathy. The ancient Orientals had such a sense of the worth of tears shed in sorrow for another, that at their funeral assemblies it was the custom of a priest to go about among the mourners with a piece of cotton in his hand, with which he carefully collected the flowing tears, to squeeze them into a tiny bottle, that they might be preserved religiously. And there were those who held "that in the agony of death when all medicines have failed, a drop of tears, so collected, put into the mouth of a dying man, has been known to revive him." There is a truth symbolized in this belief, as in many another legend of a false religion. A tear of sympathy has saved more than one from death. Its lack has caused the death of more than one.

We have no need of bottled tears for the help of the despairing. But we have need to let our tears of sympathy flow in the sight of those who are in sorrow or in despondency; and to speak words of cheer to those whom we would gladden and inspire anew. There are, indeed,

“Words that weep, and tears that speak.”

And it is our duty, as it is our privilege, to give of such words and such tears to those who would perish for their lack.

## IX.

### *MEANING WHAT YOU SAY.*

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There was a Thanksgiving Day service in a state-prison chapel. All the prisoners were gathered there. The writer, then a young layman who had been asked in to address the prisoners on that occasion, rose in the chaplain's desk, and as he looked down into the faces of the motley crowd before him he was overwhelmingly impressed by a sense of the varied life-stories struggling against concealment in those upturned countenances, and he realized as never before the bond of the common humanity which he shared with those whose place for the hour was so very different from his own.

Moved by this thought, the speaker began his remarks by referring to the often quoted ejaculation of the godly English divine, on seeing a condemned prisoner go by on his

way to the gallows: "But for the grace of God, there goes John Bradford;" and he added that he came not to speak to those from whom he was far remote, but to say kindly words of greeting and sympathy to those who were his brother men. As he went on with his address, he found that he had before him appreciative and responsive hearers, who could feel, and who were not ashamed to show their feeling. One face particularly attracted his attention. It was that of a man of mature years, whose countenance bore signs of intense experiences. His look was now one of searching and longing and wondering gaze, while deep emotion was showing itself in every quivering feature.

After the chapel service was concluded, and the prisoners had returned to their cells, the visitor was told that a convict desired to speak with him, and he accompanied the warden, accordingly, to respond to the call. Behind the bars of the cell at which they stopped the visitor saw that face which had so impressed him in the chapel. The pris-

oner apologized for having asked this interview, and then went on to say: "It was very kind of you to come down here to talk to us to-day, and we all thank you for it. But, Mr. Trumbull, I'm a plain man, and I want to ask you a plain question, Did you mean what you said?" "Most certainly I did," said the visitor. "But why do you ask that question?" "Why, because I want to know whether you really do feel as you said you do, that only the grace of God makes any difference between you and the rest of us; and that you really count us your brothers." "Indeed, I do feel that," was the earnest response. "And I constantly thank God for holding me back, by his grace, from the commission of such sin as would bring me into this prison as a convict." The prisoner clasped his hands together, and with streaming tears he said: "Thank God for that. I'm in here for life, and I shall stay more contentedly, now that I know I've got one brother in the world."

That interview was a lesson to that prison-



visitor—a lesson he can never forget. And the question which was asked him by that anxious convict is a keen and truth-testing question to any speaker anywhere—in public or in private—“Did you mean what you said?” “Do you mean what you say?”

As a rule, men do not mean what they say. In the unchanging East, to-day as in the days of Abraham, a man who is selling a piece of property professes his readiness to give it without charge, when he really means to secure its full value—if not more. The forms of expression in selling goods are somewhat different in our Western world; but there is quite as much of unmeaning speech in such a transaction here as in the East. So, also, in every phase of personal and social life. The language of profanity is used with hardly a thought of its meaning, and with no thought of meaning it, by the lowest street-boy, and again by the fashionable fop. The language of polite society is often as devoid of conscious meaning as the language of coarseness and irreverence. And

even the language of religious conversation, and of private and of public prayer, is rarely used with a full sense of its meaning, and with the full meaning of its sense. If, indeed, a speaker were asked abruptly, after his words of affirmation or of protest, of denunciation or of assurance, in his bargaining, in his quarreling, in his discussions, in his exchange of courtesies, or in his devotions, "Did you mean what you said?" he would generally have to answer, if he answered truly, "No, I only spoke after the manner of men; and I would not be held responsible for the full meaning of my words."

It is not that men generally are consciously insincere, and that they intend to say that which they do not mean; but it is that they are thoughtless in their extravagance, or in their severity, or in their coldness, of ordinary speech. They speak out in quickness of temper, or in over-intensity of momentary feeling; they sneer, or they denounce, or they praise, or they express doubt or they make personal professions, or

they give personal promises,—without a realizing sense of the full meaning of their words; hence without a purpose of employing those words in their proper meaning. Yet, many a time, words that are not meant as they are spoken are counted as if they were used meaningfully, and they are a cause of sad or of bitter memories accordingly. Again, the words which would have healed a broken heart, or have cheered a whole one, if recognized as intelligently sincere words on their speaker's part, have failed of carrying weight because of the feeling that not all that was said by them was really meant. Hence it is that there is much to the hearer, as well as to the speaker, in the answer to the pointed question, "Did you mean what you said?"

In the light of this truth, there is a depth of added meaning in the loving words of Jesus to his disciples, whereby he gives assurance to his loved ones that his words are spoken in their fullest meaning. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you," he says; "not as the world giveth, give I

unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful." The ordinary greeting of the East was and is in the wish and assurance of peace. Now, as in the days of Joseph, and of Gideon, and of Jehu, men, when they meet, salute each other with their "Shalom," or "Salamu," or "Saalam," or "Peace," meaning thereby much, or little, or nothing at all. But when Jesus says "Peace," he means all that he says. "Not as the world giveth [this word] give I [this word] unto you." The world does not mean what it says when it says Peace; but I do mean it in all reality and in all heartiness. That is the declaration of Jesus; and his spirit is the spirit of every true-hearted follower of Jesus, in the use of all words of assurance, of courtesy, of promise, of censure, or of reproach. Not as the world giveth, give I these words; for men of the world do not mean what they say, but I do.

The loving words of Jesus, re-spoken in the spirit of Jesus, have power to comfort and to strengthen the heavy-hearted every-

where, because of the conviction those words carry that they mean all that they seem to say. It is not enough to speak such words unmeaningly, nor is it enough to have the feeling which such words might phrase, and not to give the words themselves expression. Not the words without meaning, nor the meaning without words, will suffice; but the words with the meaning are called for. The duty is to mean all that you say of loving sympathy, and to say all that you mean in that direction of helpfulness. First mean it, and then say it. Feel it;—

“ Then hide it not, the music of the soul,  
Dear sympathy expressed with kindly voice,  
But let it like a shining river roll  
To deserts dry—to hearts that would rejoice.  
Oh, let the sympathy of kindly words  
Sound for the poor, the friendless, and the weak,  
And He will bless you! He who struck the chords  
Will strike another when in turn you seek.”

## X.

### *GIVING AND RECEIVING PRAISE.*

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What is praise? It is primarily the expressed price of a person or thing. It is the declared estimate of that which has a recognized value. There can be no sincere praise where there is no definite estimate. If the estimate is inaccurate, the praise is misleading. The real worth of praise depends, therefore, on its sincerity and accuracy.

God wants the praise of his creatures. He asks for it. He rejoices in it. If those whom he has created, if those whom he has redeemed, recognize his power and goodness, God wants them to say so. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me," he says. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye him, all his angels. Praise ye him, sun and moon. Praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise the Lord from the earth; fire, and hail; snow, and

vapor; stormy wind fulfilling his word; mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl; kings of the earth, and all peoples; princes, and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens; old men and children; let them praise the name of the Lord. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."

Nor does God limit approved praise to the expressed estimate of himself by his creatures. He promises praise to his children. He declares of his scattered people when they shall be redeemed and regathered out of all the countries of the earth: "I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame." And his promise is, that in the day of final award he will say to each one of those who have loved and trusted him, even while they were at the best but unprofitable servants, doing nothing more than their explicit duty, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things;" and this

praise of his creatures by the Lord shall be in the presence of all the universe of God. By the Divine precept, and by the Divine example, praise of God's creatures is declared praiseworthy. By the word of the Lord, as well as by our personal experiences in life, we are shown that praise "is pleasant, and praise is comely."

No Christian duty is more imperative than to give and to take praise wisely. Praise is not only pleasant and comely, but it is needful. Everybody who is good for anything needs praise. No one ever gets above this need in himself. No one ought to feel above meeting it in others. If God asks for praise of himself, and promises praise to his children, who, among the sons of men, shall say that he is above needing praise, or above giving it to another? All life is a struggle. All attainment costs exhausting effort. He who has made a worthy struggle, and who feels its strain, needs the comfort and the stimulus of praise. He needs to be cheered and helped by the knowledge that his strug-



gle is noted and approved; that a proper estimate is put upon it, and that the appraised value finds expression in words. The best disposed child in the world does not do right without trying to do so. He has his temptations to battle. When he has overcome these, he ought to be praised for his well-doing. Praise for that which is praiseworthy cannot be safely withheld from a child. It is as needful to him as bread, or as milk; and if he does not get it at least three times a day, he is either doing very poorly, or is not receiving his deserts.

It is wrong to give insincere or inaccurate praise to child or man. And flattery is the very opposite of praise. Praise is an estimate of value. Flattery is the effort to compensate for a lack of value. "If their words have any meaning at all," says Jonathan Edwards, of those who praise others, "by praise they must mean the exercise or testimony of some sorts of esteem, respect, or honorable regard." "Just praise is only a debt," says Dr. Johnson. But "flattery," he

adds, "if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance, but [to our] knowledge of our failure, and to delight us rather as it consoles our wants than displays our possessions." Flattery is uniformly as injurious as sincere and wise praise is helpful.

A child ought not to be praised for his looks, or his possessions; for no credit is due to him on their account. But for whatever he says or does well, and for all his right enduring or right resisting, he deserves praise, and he ought to have it. It cannot harm him to receive it. It is wrong to deny it to him. Children who deserved well, and whose parents and friends knew it to be so, have actually put an end to their lives in heavy-hearted despair, when the withheld words of praise to which they were fairly entitled would have saved and cheered them to lives of courage and usefulness. And little hearts are aching on every side to-day from lack of the praises which their brave struggles have merited, but which a mistaken

sense of duty, or a culpable neglect of the children's needs, have caused their parents or teachers to deny them.

Parents need praise from their children; and they ought to have it. It does the children good to recognize their parents' value, and to express it; and it does the loving parents good to receive their children's praises. So all through the family. The Bible says of the real good wife and mother: "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." Of course he does. His words of praise are not stinted. "Many daughters have done virtuously," he says; "but thou excellest them all." When a man has the best wife in the world, he ought to tell her so. There is no danger of his telling her so too frequently. And if she has a husband worth praising, it is a wife's duty to praise him. Failing there, she is so far an unfaithful wife.

Servants also ought to have all the praise which they deserve. Keeping back a servant's deserts of praise is as truly blame-

worthy as keeping back a servant's wages. And housekeepers who treat their servants best in this particular, fare best in the service given them. Mistresses who are readiest to give praise freely and fairly to their servants, have servants most deserving of praise. What if the servants do nothing more than their duty? They deserve credit for doing that. How much more than that did anybody ever do? The milkman, the grocer, the butcher, the dressmaker, the tailor, the shoemaker, the ash-man, whoever fills his or her place well, and furnishes a good quality of material or of work, deserves praise, and is short paid without it.

Even those persons who are actuated by the purest and highest sense of duty, and who on principle would do their very utmost without a word of human commendation, ought to receive the praise which is their due for noble doing. Your best friend may be true and unselfish in your behalf, in a trying emergency, without a thought of winning your praise; but he deserves none

the less—nay, all the more—your praise in consequence. It is not the easiest thing in the world for any man to be true and unselfish. It costs an effort to keep down self and to make large sacrifices. You ought not to forget this; nor should you fail to speak the assurances of recognition and gratitude which will gladden your friend's heart, and make him stronger and readier for the next trial which may come to him.

And your pastor needs your praises, your expressions of grateful acknowledgment of his timely words and his loving deeds, as surely as your child needs them. "But," asks one, "shall I thank my pastor every Sunday? He knows that I am always grateful to him. Isn't that enough?" If you have any warm appreciation of his words every Sunday, you need not hesitate to say so. For whatever he does in your behalf, be free to thank him, to give him praise. Of course to make your praise of any worth it must be sincere and discriminating; but no minister was ever disturbed or injured by .

the too frequent recognition of his helpful labors in behalf of the people to whom he ministered. And how can your pastor know that he has been of service to you to-day unless you tell him so? Many a pastor's heart is heavy, and his sleep disturbed, after a faithful week's work, just because no person in all his congregation has given him one word of assurance that the strength he has expended so cheerfully has given aid to a single soul. When our Lord had healed ten lepers, and knew that his work had told for them all, he could ask with sadness, as he saw how little readiness there was to render him deserved praise, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" Shall the disciple be less sensitive to expressions of gratitude than was his Lord?

And if it is right that you should give praise when others deserve it, it is right that you should receive praise when you deserve it. It is never right to proffer what it would be wrong to receive. You ought to welcome praise. You ought to be grateful for praise.

You ought, indeed, to feel that if you are not praised, either you are undeserving or you are denied your deserts. If you shrink from the honest, hearty praise of those whom you value, you have reason to fear the cause of your shrinking, or to fear its consequences. There are those who indulge in self-praise by protesting against the praise of others. They flatter themselves with the thought that they are not to be flattered. As Decius says of Cæsar:

“But when I tell him he hates flatterers,  
He says he does, being then most flattered.”

Others again, by refusing praise, refuse all comment on themselves by any one, on the principle enunciated by Macaulay in his rejection of Mrs. Trimmer's commendation of his writings: “The right to praise implies the right to blame.” They are unwilling to have any judgment passed on themselves, their conduct, or their words, even by their dearest friends.

While no such motive as this can be sup-

posed to influence you in your modest shrinking from praise which you fear is undeserved, or in your thought that you may be misled through over-praise, you ought to realize that there is greater safety in welcoming both praise and blame from a friend than in rejecting either. No friend will blame if he is not privileged to praise. And if you are without the wise help of a true friend's comments on your course, you are in peculiar peril from self-flattery. As Lord Bacon says, in his essay on Friendship, "There is no such flatterer as a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend." The Divine injunction is, "Let another man praise thee"—when you are worthy of praise.

"But how can I know when offered praise is deserved?" Ah! *that* is a fair question. Just there a responsibility is on you. Prof-fered praise ought to go into the crucible in your heart laboratory, that its value may be fairly tested there; for "praise undeserved is scandal in disguise." You are to judge of



the sincerity of him who praises you. If he is to be trusted as one who speaks his convictions honestly, you need not fear that he is a flatterer. You are to judge of his intelligence and fairness. If his opinions are ordinarily well grounded, you have no reason to doubt that they are so when he expresses himself concerning your words and works. You are to judge of his fidelity to your welfare when censure is demanded. There are times when "open rebuke is better than secret love," when it is better for you that a friend should speak out in caution or reproof than that he should keep silence to retain your favor. The friend who, on occasion, will blame you wisely and faithfully, can certainly be believed when he says you are deserving of his heartiest praise. And as in the receiving of praise, so in its giving; sincerity, frankness, thoughtful discrimination, and fearless fairness, are to be the crucible tests of its real value.

## XI.

### *THE GRACE OF TENDERNESS.*

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Tenderness is one of the rarer graces, as it is one of the more admirable and potent of graces. Tenderness is sometimes confounded with gentleness; but there is a soul in tenderness that does not exist in gentleness. Gentleness is of the manner; but tenderness is of the spirit. Gentleness is external; tenderness is from within.

“Gentleness” is literally the evidence of good birth; it is the manner which is supposed to be natural to those who are well born, who are of refined and choice families. “Tenderness” is literally an outstretching of one’s self toward another. Gentleness may or may not be of the will or of the affections. Tenderness is always a result of purpose and feeling. Gentleness may be active or passive. Tenderness is always and only active. We

may lay down a bar of iron with gentleness; but we would never think of tenderness in such an action. A dog or a cat may be called gentle when it is not entitled to be called tender. A lady may bear herself with gentleness in directing a porter to move her traveling trunk, yet without exhibiting tenderness toward him. Gentleness may be inseparable from one's nature, and show itself at all times. Tenderness cannot be shown alike to all, nor be always alike appropriate and commendable; yet when tenderness is appropriate it has a beauty and a power which mere gentleness can never attain to.

Tenderness is necessarily unselfish. One may be gentle while thinking only of himself. In fact, selfishness may make a man gentle, when he ought to be aroused to indignation and vehemence. His gentleness may be a result of his selfish love of ease, or fear of harm. But tenderness involves a certain forgetfulness of self, in the reaching out toward another because of the other's need or want. *Tenderness* includes the idea of sympathy;

of feeling with another; of putting one's self alongside of the other, for the time being, and of acting and speaking in kindly consideration, out of that understanding of the other's necessities and longings. It is in recognition of this unselfish element of tenderness that the poet Gray sings:

"To each his sufferings; all are men,  
Condemned alike to groan:—  
The tender, for another's pain;  
The unfeeling, for his own."

And Hood has the same view of truth, when he pleads for the rescued body of the poor suicide:—

"Take her up tenderly,  
Lift her with care!  
Take her up instantly,  
Loving, not loathing!  
Touch her not scornfully!  
Think of her mournfully!  
Gently, and humanly!"

The tenderness here called for is of the spirit; is of the unselfish and charitable consideration which means far more than mere gentle-

ness of manner in the handling of an uplifted corpse. Nor can there be tenderness toward the dead or toward the living except in some generous forgetfulness of self, and some temporary absorption in another's weal or woe.

Tenderness is often spoken of as a womanly trait; and the man who evidences it is sometimes said to be "as tender as a woman;" but there is no suggestion of a lack of strength in tenderness. It is woman's nobler characteristic, a characteristic not possessed by every woman, that is shown in tenderness. Gentleness may consist with a weak nature; but tenderness is commonly the sign of strength of soul and character. It takes a strong nature to be self-forgetful, and without a measure of self-forgetfulness tenderness is an impossibility.

Tenderness frequently shows itself to peculiar advantage in the spirit and conduct of a faithful physician, or of a skilled and relentless surgeon. Where one practitioner is gentle, another is tender; the one is no more harsh than the other, but he lacks the sympathetic

heart which the patient recognizes so gratefully in the other. Indeed, there may be gentleness without tenderness in the medical or the mental or the moral care of a patient or of a pupil; while on the other hand there may be tenderness of spirit with an unavoidable severity of treatment. This truth is recognized in the Horatian Canons of Friendship:

“Be we then still, to those we hold most dear,  
Fatherly fond, and tenderly severe.”

Although tenderness is not exclusively an attribute of womanliness, there is no charm of a true woman that surpasses it. A mother's tenderness is a mother's pre-eminent power. It is tenderness that so often enables a refined lady to subdue and soften a class of rough boys whom no stern discipline could bring under control. The lack of tenderness is the supreme lack of many a lady, whose opportunities of birth and culture, and whose possession of tireless energy and of attractive person and manners, would, but for this lack,

win for her love and gratitude and devotedness, where now she has cold admiration and respect.

Every heart is open to tenderness, feels its power, responds gratefully to its expression. Many a physician would have a new hold on his patients, if only he could be as sympathetically tender in their treatment as he is skilled and faithful in his ministry to them. Many a man who never lacks in dignity of bearing or in gentleness of manner toward those whom he meets, would find himself binding friends by new bonds, if only he could be self-forgetfully tender in his recognition of their peculiarities, and in his adaptation to their modes of thought and feeling. Many a teacher whose ability and fidelity as an instructor are beyond all question, could reach the innermost hearts of scholars who now seem hopelessly obdurate, if he could but feel that tenderness of interest in those scholars which would show itself in the touch of his hand, in the tones of his voice, and in every glance of his eye.

None of us ever get beyond our longing for tenderness. None of us ever find any substitute for its comforting grace. The wider and the deeper our experiences of the world, the fuller is our realization of the superiority of this blessing, and the keener is our sense of its rarity.

"We long for tenderness like that which hung  
About us, lying on our mother's breast;  
A selfless feeling, that no pen or tongue  
Can praise aright, since silence sings it best:  
A love as far removed from passion's heat  
As from the chillness of its dying fire;  
A love to lean on when the failing feet  
Begin to totter, and the eyes to tire.  
In youth's brief hey-day hottest love we seek,  
The reddest rose we grasp,—but when it dies,  
God grant that later blossoms, violets meek,  
May spring for us beneath life's autumn skies!  
God grant some loving one be near to bless  
Our weary way with simple tenderness!"

God manifests himself toward his children in tenderness. No human heart need lack for this grace, in the hour of its early or its later longings. "As one whom his mother



comforteth, so will I comfort you," is God's assurance of tenderness. It is "because of the tender mercy of our God" that Jesus Christ is sent to "be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" and so to be in sympathy with us at all points of our trial and our need. And because of God's understanding of the universal craving for tenderness, his injunction comes to us all; "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you."

## XII.

### *THE NOBILITY OF APOLOGIZING.*

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There are few surer tests of nobility of personal character, few surer proofs of refinement of personal nature and of thoroughness of personal culture, than an unvarying readiness to apologize freely and heartily on any and every occasion where one has failed—through a lack of self-control, or of thoughtfulness, or of skill, or of gracefulness—in coming up to his own highest ideal of attainment in his conduct or bearing toward another. To an ignoble mind, the thought of apologizing suggests the idea of being in some sense humiliated, if not indeed degraded,—through the confession of having failed to do as well as one should have done. To a noble mind, the thought of apologizing suggests the idea of an uplift of personality,—through claiming a superior standard of ordinary per-

formance to that which was indicated in the occurrence apologized for.

The English word "apology" is, by its etymology, the "doing away," or the "putting away, by a word"—by a spoken or a written word. In the German language, there is a corresponding phrase which means the taking one's self away from the act—the "getting out of it"—by a statement. The essence of an apology, as the word is understood in its ordinary English sense, is an expression of regret for some performance, or for some omission, unworthy of the best and truest self of the actor. The word is not commonly employed for a formal request for forgiveness, where an *intentional* offense has been committed; but rather for an explicit assurance that the real or the seeming slight or failure was an unfortunate slip on the part of the apologizer; and for an expression of one's desire to be excused for not coming up to his own ideal performance. In this sense, the apologizer asks the privilege of putting away the offense by a word, or of taking

himself away from the offense, and of being himself recognized as one to whom such an offense does not properly belong. Thus it is that the higher the man's personal standard, the keener is his sense of occasions of apology, and the prompter and the heartier are his apologetic expressions.

A man, stepping into or out of a street-car, accidentally treads on the foot of another. If he is a man of coarse grain, and of coarse manners, he is likely to say to himself, if he does not actually speak his thoughts aloud: "That man's foot oughtn't to have been in my way. I was in my place; but he wasn't in his." If, on the contrary, he is a man of refinement of feeling, he will reproach himself for failing to guard against such a misstep; and he will stop and raise his hat, and say in all heartiness, and in a tone of voice that proves his sincerity of regret: "I beg your pardon, sir. That was very clumsy on my part. I am very sorry for it." Just in proportion to his superiority of character and of cultivation will a man be explicit and pro-

fuse in his formal apologies in a case like this. Similarly will one man be more prompt and more hearty than another in his words of apology, as disclosing his measure of nobleness and of refinement, when he has jostled against another in a crowded passage-way, or has dropped something he was handing to another as an act of courtesy, or has failed to recognize another's need of special attention or of helpful service in an emergency.

So, also, will it be when a true man discovers that he has neglected to acknowledge promptly some service rendered to himself, or that he has been infelicitous in his words of acknowledgment, through absence of mind, or through embarrassment of manner. And this is not because the man reproaches himself for any lack of good purpose, or for any unkind thought or intent; nor yet because he fears that he may be suspected of purposing a slight or a failure; but because he sees that he could have done better; and for his own sake—even if there were no other cause of regret—he wishes to express his sor-

row that he came in any way short of his best possible attainment.

The word "apology" has undoubtedly suffered, as has the word "honor," with which it is so often associated, through its misuse in connection with the craving of pardon, at the point of a pistol or at the threat of a bludgeon, for a direct or an implied insult. But an "apology" in its best sense is not an enforced call for pardon, but rather is a volunteered expression of regret for one's recognized unintentional shortcomings. Just here is the difference between the ignoble man's idea of an apology of *servility*, and the noble-minded man's idea of the apology of *civility*. An apology of *servility* is a slavish apology, in recognition of one's inferiority to the person to whom he apologizes. An apology of *civility* is an independent citizen's recognition of the inferiority of his accidental performance to his own high conception of what is correct and desirable in the premises.

A beautiful illustration of noble-mindedness in an apology was given in an incident

in our American civil war. In an hour of intensest excitement in one of the great historic battles of that war, the commanding general—one of the greatest of our generals—took exception to the disposition of the forces of a general officer under his command. Deeming the issue of the contest to be involved in that disposition of forces, the commander gave loud and emphatic expression to his disapproval.

The result of the battle proved that, in that instance, the subordinate was correct in his judgment, and that the commander was in error. The commander had, however, done only that which was the prompting of his best judgment, in the light which he had at the moment of his outburst of disapproval; nor had he overstepped the bounds of a commander's absolute right in such an emergency. Yet he regretted that his own judgment had not served him better in his observation of the true state of affairs; and he reproached himself for falling short of his own high standard of absolute accuracy.

The battle being over, the commander sent for the subordinate whom he had publicly censured, and, summoning his own staff-officers into his presence, he informed his subordinate, in their hearing, that, as he had been in error in censuring him for his conduct, he now apologized to him thus publicly. Nor was this all. On a following day he rode over to that division commander's headquarters, and asked to have the entire division called out in line. Then, in the presence of the division, he stated that he had done the division a wrong through giving an undeserved censure to its commander, and that he now desired to apologize to the commander and to the division in this public manner. Who will question that such an act as that proved the exceptional nobleness of that great-hearted commander?

If, indeed, the offense or the failure be an obvious one,—as in clumsiness of action, in sharpness of speech, or in seeming rudeness of neglect,—it is comparatively easy for a person of very moderate refinement and cultiva-



tion to be prompt and outspoken in apologies. But when the transgression or the shortcoming is not so obvious, even though its effect may be all the more disastrous,—as when one has imagined a slight that was not intended, or has suspected a wrong that did not exist, or has given way to an unkind thought through an entire misunderstanding, or has failed to perceive a generous spirit that ought to have been honored,—it is not so easy to make confession of personal error, and to apologize for the lack of conformity to one's best ideal of character and of conduct. And here it is, that pre-eminent nobleness of nature and admirableness of self-control are surest of being shown in the fulness and the freeness of explicit apologies.

It requires greater nobleness to have a high standard for one's self than to have it for some one else. It requires greater nobleness to perceive and to emphasize one's own shortcomings than to give prominence to the shortcomings of others. Hence, he who is noblest-minded, and whose nature is most

refined, and whose training in well-doing is completest, is ever quickest to see his own mistake, and promptest to apologize for his error, out of regard for the personal ideal he has fallen short of.

If, for example, when there were two possible explanations of another's course, such a man saw only the more unfavorable one of these, and was suspicious accordingly,—on discovering his error he owes it to himself to apologize for his unfairness of judgment, and for his ill-grounded suspicion. It does not satisfy him to know that he was sincere at the time in his erroneous opinion, and that he then saw no ground for any other judgment; he blames himself for not seeing the true state of the case, and for not being swayed by a more charitable conception. He is sorry for his own failure, and he wants to say so to the one who knows of his failure. For his own sake, if for no other reason, he must evidence his consciousness of failure as widely as he disclosed that failure. So all the way along in the every-day

relations of life; he whose personal standard is highest, is promptest and most explicit in apologizing for every known lack of conformity to that standard; and every added instance of such apologizing on his part gives him an increase of power in his effort to conform to that standard.

Frequency and fulness in apologizing, in child or in man, is a proof of one's unmistakable possession of a consciously higher ideal than his own constant attainment. An unreadiness to apologize is an indication of one's lack of conception of any higher standard than his own immediate performance. And here is a line which distinguishes the noble from the ignoble.

### XIII.

#### *NOT HAPPINESS, BUT SERVICE, THE TRUE OBJECT IN LIFE.*

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A desire for happiness is universal in the human race, but happiness is never a worthy object of life; and he who lives for happiness can never attain to the highest measure of happiness in life. Unless this truth is clearly recognized in the struggle of existence, there is no possibility of nobleness of endeavor in that struggle, or of satisfying success as its result. Just here, indeed, is the all-dividing line between worthy and unworthy purposes of living. Self is on the one hand; service is on the other. On the choice between the two, pivot the issues of both character and destiny.

In the sphere of all heroic achievement in human living, the sway of this truth is indisputable. No man can be a hero whose chief thought is of himself. It is the desire to

live—or to die—for a worthy cause, to render service at any cost in some hour of imminent need, to count no effort or sacrifice too dear for outlay in the unselfish purpose of the moment, that makes and marks the hero. Happiness may come to the hero as a result of his heroism, but if happiness had been his object in life, he could never have been a hero; and he is none the less a hero if happiness be denied him. As Emerson tells us:

“The hero is not fed on sweets,  
Daily his own heart he eats;  
Chambers of the great are jails,  
And head-winds right for royal sails.”

Browning's well-known picture of the hero soldier-lad at Ratisbon is the perfect illustration of the unselfish spirit of true heroism. Napoleon stood on a mound watching his storming-party from a distance, in anxious solicitude, when

“Out 'twixt the battery smokes there flew  
A rider, bound on bound  
Full galloping; nor bridle drew  
Until he reached the mound.

"Then off there flung in smiling joy,  
 And held himself erect  
 By just his horse's mane, a boy:  
 You hardly could suspect,  
 (So tight he kept his lips compressed,  
 Scarce any blood came through,)  
 You looked twice ere you saw his breast  
 Was all but shot in two.

"'Well,' cried he, 'Emperor, by God's grace  
 We've got you Ratisbon!  
 The marshal's in the market-place,  
 And you'll be there anon  
 To see your flag-bird flap his vans  
*Where I, to heart's desire,*  
*Perched him!*' The chief's eye flashed; his plans  
 Soared up again like fire.

"The chief's eye flashed; but presently  
 Softened itself, as sheathes  
 A film the mother-eagle's eye  
 When her bruised eaglet breathes:  
 'You're wounded!' 'Nay,' his soldier's pride  
 Touched to the quick, he said:  
 'I'm killed, Sire!' And, his chief beside,  
 Smiling, the boy fell dead."

Had that boy lived for self, or for service?  
 Could he have been the hero he was, had  
 mere happiness been his object in life?

Life is, in a sense, one vast battle-field; and he who thinks first of his personal happiness is out of place in life; while he who desires to be of personal service there will find new opportunities of indulging his desire at every step of his earnest progress. The child who starts in life with a main purpose of being happy will fail of happiness so long as he continues in its pursuit; but if he be trained to find his joy in unselfish service in behalf of others, he will be likely to compass his main purpose of life, while finding more happiness as an incidental result of his unselfish serving than he could find through its deliberate seeking. And as with the child, so with the mature man, the seeking of happiness is as unsuccessful as it is unworthy a pursuit in life; while the unselfish seeking of service has the promise of assured success, together with the highest possibilities of added happiness.

Friendship is but a pretense or a failure so long as it is valued primarily because of the happiness it brings. Only he whose chief

desire in his friendship is to be a friend in unselfish serving, even at the utter loss of his personal happiness or comfort, knows what it is to be a true friend, or can experience the truest joy of a noble and an ennobling friendship. Shakespeare brings out this thought at its fullest when, in a sonnet to his friend expressive of his undying love, he urges that friend not to allow the loss of him to be a sorrow, and adds, in unselfish tenderness:

“Nay, if you read this line, remember not  
The hand that writ it; for I love you so  
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,  
If thinking on me then should cause you woe.  
Oh! if, I say, you look upon this verse  
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,  
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,  
But let your love even with my life decay.”

And such unselfish wishing for service as this is the very soul of all true friendship.

Married life can never be what it ought to be while the husband or the wife makes personal happiness the main object of its secur-



ing. If a man seeks a wife because he thinks she will make him happy, he is likely to be disappointed in his life-pursuit so far; but if he enters the married state in the hope of giving happiness to the woman he loves, by his unselfish endeavors to be of service to her and to hers, he is likely to succeed in his endeavors, and to have more of happiness, in addition, than he could have if he lived for happiness.

And as it is with the husband, so it is with the wife also, in the marriage relation. If she marries in order to be happy, she will probably find that she has made a misstep in marrying; but if she marries in order to be unselfishly of service as wife and mother, she will always find something to do in the line of her object of living, and her highest happiness will be an incidental result of her success in a life of loving service. So, also, it is in every sphere of life. He who seeks happiness as the object of his living will fail, and will be a failure; while he who seeks to be of service in his life-sphere will not come

short of a fair measure of success and of happiness in life.

Just at this point it is that the religion of the Bible differs absolutely from the irreligion of the world and from every form of false religion. All the materialists and agnostics and scoffers among the more cultivated classes of the world make personal happiness the highest object of living; just as surely as all the sensualists and voluptuaries and epicures of the lower order of humanity make personal pleasure the chief purpose of existence. In the grosser and in the more refined forms of false religion the same idea is predominant; whether it be represented in the Scandinavian Valhalla, the Muhammadan Paradise, or the Booddhistic Nirvāna. But in the Bible, on the contrary, the supreme duty of man, and the supreme object of man's living, may be summed up in man's loving service of God, and in man's loving ministry to his fellow-man. Not happiness, but service, is the true object of life, according to the Bible standard, for every man in every sphere of living.

And just here, again, it is that the religion of the Bible is oftenest misapprehended by those who count the religion of the Bible their religion. There are Christians who seem to suppose that it is God's mission to give them happiness, rather than that it is their mission to render God service. There are Christians who are always readier to tell God what he can do to make them happy, than to ask God what they can do to serve him. And there are Christians who evidently deem it the most natural thing in the world that God should give them the desires of their heart for the hour, but that it is very strange that God should call on them in his providence to serve him by doing and enduring that from which their whole natures recoil in their love of selfish ease. And thus it is that God's standard for man is very different from the average man's standard for God. Man is created to find the highest end of his being in unselfishly doing God's service; but man inclines to think of God as existing primarily to secure happiness for man.

The more service a man renders to God, the more service God enables a man to render to him. "Unto him that hath shall be given," in this field as in every other. Not happiness apart from service, but the happiness of added service, is God's reward to him who serves God faithfully. Maurice emphasizes this truth when he says: "The reward is not repose, but fresh work; a larger sphere of usefulness and influence. The command over ten cities is given to the man whose pound had grown to ten pounds; the command of five cities, to the man whose pound had grown to five pounds. The faculty of doing good [in God's loving service], by an eternal law, is multiplied and magnified according to the use which is made of it."

That a man's ultimate happiness will be secured by his unselfish service of God is not to be doubted; but so long as a man lives only for his own happiness, he can no more render unselfish service to God than a soldier can be a hero in the hour of battle while the chief desire of his heart is to

secure his safety from bodily harm. On the highest plane of living, as on the lowest, man's truest joy can be found only in a purpose of life that overshadows all thought of his personal comfort and safety; for whosoever would save himself shall lose the prize he seeks; but whosoever shall lose himself in Christ's service shall win all that he lives for—and more.

#### XIV.

### *THE COST OF RENDERING SERVICE.*

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In the mental and moral world, and usually, if not always, in the material world, the value of a thing corresponds with its cost. And this is a truth which is not commonly recognized among men.

It is not always realized, hence it is not borne in mind as it should be, that no service of the head or heart is ever rendered to us, and that we never render any such service to another, except to the extent of the cost of that service. It seems to us evident that this is not true of menial service. We all know that material assistance—from a servant, a child, or a friend—which costs but little in time or money, is often of more value to us than that which would cost many times more; and we naturally incline to the opinion that the same is

true of services in the line of thought or feeling. It seems so easy for some persons to render us important service in counsel or sympathy, and we ourselves find it such a delight similarly to serve some others, that it hardly seems possible that such service invariably represents a cost to the doer corresponding with its value to the one served. And here is where our mistake lies.

It is not always that the cost of the service is afresh at the time of its rendering; but the involved cost is somehow represented in the actual value of the service. How quickly the doctor reads your case, and prescribes efficiently for it, when you send for him in an hour of threatened illness. It seems to have cost him very little to say those few words which bring you a permanent cure; but if you could realize all his struggles and outlay in the years of his professional study, and all the anxieties and toils of his years of professional experience, which have gone to enable him to speak those few words so confidently, you would see how

truly the value of his professional counsel represents the steadily accumulating cost of that counsel. And so with the lawyer, or the teacher, or the well-informed friend. A quickly spoken answer which instantly resolves your doubts over a question which has long perplexed you hopelessly, is valuable just because it represents a cost which he who so easily renders you this service had paid before you came to him for help.

If you are aided by a sermon, or an essay, or a poem, or an editorial, you may be sure that there has been in some way a cost to the writer corresponding to the value to you of that production. It is not only a fact, that

"True ease in writing comes from art, not chance;"

but it is also an obvious truth, that no one can give expression to feelings of which he has known nothing in his own heart, nor have real sympathy beyond his personal experiences of privilege or trial. This it is that measures the power of the poets:

"They learn in suffering what they teach in song."



This, in fact, measures the power of every writer or speaker who would do service by his words. The value of his service to others is settled by the preliminary cost of that service to himself. So it is that the poet asks:

“Will you seek it? Will you brave it?  
’Tis a strange and solemn thing,  
Learning long before your teaching,  
Listening long before your preaching,  
Suffering before you sing.  
And the songs that echo longest,  
Deepest, fullest, truest, strongest,  
With your life-blood you will write.”

In the service of the heart it is that this truth stands out most vividly, and with fewest exceptions, when once we have come to realize it in its fullest scope and meaning. Every heart-throb of love, every look of affection, every word of tenderness or sympathy, every deed of kindness, is of value just in proportion to its immediate or its accumulated cost. Only a mother knows how much her love to her child has cost her; and perhaps she herself cannot appreciate it fully,

but the cost of her love for that child is, nevertheless, the measure of that love's value to the child. It is the mother who will not pay the cost of those multiplied self-denials, and of those prolonged and uncomplaining endurances, and the tiresome yet tireless watchings, in behalf of her child, which enter into the very composition and growth of true maternal love, whose love is of least value to her little one.

Few, again, stop to think, or could fully understand if they did think, how much, in a life-long struggle, it has cost a true friend to reach the possibility of becoming a firm and an unselfish friend, and of giving a friendship correspondingly. A very smile has value according as it represents the cost of attaining to the sweetness of spirit and the beauty of character which it evidences. So with every hand-clasp of cordial greeting, and of every look or word of considerate or sympathetic interest. The cost determines and imparts the value.

Nor is the cost of heart service wholly

paid before the service itself is actually rendered. There is an unceasing outgo necessary to enable one to continue loving and kindly and tender and considerate and sympathetic. And again the very rendering of heart service is invariably at an immediate cost to him who renders it. There is no serving another out of our heart without a cost to our heart. However great may be the stores of love or sympathy from which we give to those in need, the giving is always a reality; it takes from those stores, and the cost to us is a conscious one.

This truth was illustrated and proven in the experience of our Saviour himself, while he bore our nature with its human weaknesses. Jesus must gain fitness for his work of loving ministry to those who were in need, by his days of fasting and his nights of prayer; and it was at an unmistakable cost to himself that he was of service to the multitude of sufferers who, after he was thus prepared for service, gathered about him and "sought to touch him: for power came forth

from him, and healed them all." And when a poor woman came in the press behind him, and stealthily touched his garment, and was thereby healed of her infirmity, "Jesus immediately, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, turned him about in the crowd," and said, "Some one did touch me: for I perceived that power had gone forth from me." If the Son of God could not be of service to one poor sufferer except at a positive and conscious cost to himself of the power, of the goodness, by which she was benefited, what right have we to think that we can ever be of loving service to anybody except at a positive and a conscious cost to ourselves? Why should we suppose that there is any value in a service on our part which costs us nothing in effort or sacrifice?

If we would be of substantial service to others, our service must cost us something. Neither our smiles nor our tears are of any value to another unless they represent real emotion in our hearts; and real emotion is

always a cost to the heart. It is not enough to put on a smile of recognition or to drop a tear of sympathy. This is very often done without cost to the one party or value to the other. The feeling which prompts—which in fact forces—the smile or the tear, gives to that token its value; and such feeling cannot be experienced without a struggle in the heart that is moved by it. It is very easy to look or to speak just as we feel. It is not always easy to feel just as we ought to look and speak. To feel right is our duty. The forcing ourselves to this duty of right feeling is commonly the true cost of real and proper service. We too often fail of serving others, because of our unwillingness to be at the necessary cost of right service.

This truth ought to give us a higher appreciation of the loving service constantly rendered to us by those whose kindness and hearty ways we have been accustomed to look at as the most natural thing in the world, in all our intercourse with them, and as coming to us without any cost on their part. If

their words and ways are valued by us, those words and ways are surely at a cost to them. It may be that it costs them more of a struggle than we imagine never to lose patience with us; always to be considerate of our moods; to keep back all show of their own discomfort or struggles; to give us and our needs the foremost place in their thoughts while they are with us; and resolutely to be cheerful and appreciative in spirit and expression, in spite of the trials which all the time they have to contend with. A thought of the cost of the service they are thus rendering to us so freely and lovingly, ought to increase our sense of its value and preciousness. Whatever is of service to us from a friend has cost that friend to the full extent of its value to us.

A cost, be it remembered, is not necessarily a *loss*. One may be all the richer for the cost of a new investment; but a cost is nevertheless always a cost. We cannot lay up treasure unless we have treasure to lay up. We cannot receive a treasure from

another unless a treasure is given to us by another. Given or received, the measure of every treasure is the cost of that treasure; and no treasure of service rendered or accepted is of greater value than is indicated in its primary or its ultimate cost.

## XV.

### *THE BURDEN OF SYMPATHY.*

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It is only a half-truth to say that "love lightens burdens," or that "to friendship every burden's light." Unselfish love, which true friendship is, bears burdens gladly for the loved friend; and if the burden be one of *service*, it is borne as lightly as it is cheerfully. But where the burden is one of *sympathy* with another who is in sorrow or weakness or need, it is all the heavier for the love which prompts its sharing.

A loved one's burden weighs on us far more heavily than any burden of our own can press. If indeed it were so that we could wholly lift the burden from the dear one by bearing it ourselves, its weight would be lightened by the consciousness of the relief thus secured to one who is dearer to us than self. But when the burden is a burden that



must still press heavily on the one whom we love, our keen sense of its weight there is, of course, intensified by our love. This thought, in fact, is involved in the primal meaning of the term "sympathy." Its literal signification is "to suffer with" another; not merely to have a correspondence of feeling with another, or a quick apprehension of another's feelings, but to *suffer* with another. And although the term "sympathy" is broadened in its meaning to include all close correspondence or sharing of feelings—whether of sorrow or of joy—with another, the fact remains that there is so much of sorrow and trial and bitterness of experience in every human heart, that to feel with another in true and unselfish love is to suffer with another keenly. And this it is that makes sympathy so rare and so precious.

If, for instance, a surgical operation were a necessity to one who is dearer to us than life, and with whom we are in completest sympathy, it would be a light and easy matter to permit the surgeon's knife to

enter our own flesh for the relief of the dear one, were that a possibility; but to sit helplessly by and watch the surgeon's work on the one who is to us as our very heart of hearts, is to bear a heavier burden than that quivering heart itself is called to bear. And so in every sphere of suffering. If the burden be wholly our own, we have the right, the duty, and the privilege, of turning our thoughts away from its weight; of calling in our philosophy to console us under its bearing; or of crushing into subjection the feelings of regret, or of disappointment, or of humiliation, which it engenders. But if the burden is another's, which we bear and share in loving sympathy, we must not try to evade it, or to philosophize away its weight, or to crush out the sense of its bitterness. It must be heavier to us than if it were our own; because it weighs without relief on our other and better self.

There is a beautiful illustration of this truth in the confession of the Apostle Paul, when he ventures on what he calls his glorying in

his weakness. He tells of the trials he has endured in his life of strangely varied experiences; of the toils, the imprisonments, the stripes, the stoning, the shipwrecks, the watchings, the fastings, the shiverings, the desertions, and the betrayals, to which he has been called. And, as the climax of his woes, he adds, as if here was something which was beyond all detail of description, and which transcended his other trials: "Beside the things which I omit, there is that [burden] which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is made to stumble, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not."

It is, in a sense, his human weakness, that causes Paul to suffer thus unceasingly with and for the objects of his tender love; but it is a weakness of which he is more ready to boast—if a frank confession of it be called

boasting—than of any token of his strength which the world would admire. And as it was with Paul, so it is with every truest man everywhere; his weakness shown in his suffering keenly and constantly with and for those whom he loves, is worthier of honor than his strength over all his personal trials and needs.

It is a great mistake to suppose that he whose outgoing love gladdens or comforts saddened hearts, finds only relief and cheer to himself in the thought of his service to others. That very quality of his nature which enables a man to feel with those who suffer causes him to suffer in their behalf; and even when he has lightened their burden by its sharing, he carries its weight the more heavily for having taken a double portion on his own loving heart. The hearts that suffer most in this life are hearts that feel the weight of other's sorrows and needs. A dear, good city missionary, who was hardly less noble and tender and loving than the Apostle Paul, was speaking to the writer of his wakeful,

restless nights, after his long days of loving ministry to the poor and the sorrowing. "Why, I should think your good work of the day would make your pillow soft and refreshing at night!" was the surprised response of his then young co-worker. "Oh! but the trouble with me is," said the missionary, "I carry a hundred aching hearts to bed with me every night; and I can't sleep, for *their* sorrows!" And that was the burden of true sympathy, a burden which must be borne by any one who truly feels the sufferings of another—a hundred times dearer to him than his own suffering heart.

There is a necessary burden-bearing in friendship. A heavier burden rests on him who loves earnestly than on him who is unloving. This is a truth that we need to have in mind when we find that we are bearing heavier burdens in and through our closest friendships than in any other sphere. The highest value of a friendship is in what it enables us to be and to do as a friend, not in what it secures to us from a friend. And

just in proportion as we are unselfishly loving and true in our friendships must we be more than sharers in the sufferings of our dearest friends. Not merely in their obvious sorrows and in their manifest needs shall we suffer with them; but in the unexpressed trials of their innermost selves, as recognized by our acuter perceptions; in their sense of spiritual loneliness; and in the ceaseless struggles of their sensitively felt contradictions of nature and character. The dearer they are to us, and the closer our sympathy with them, the heavier the burdens which we must bear in their behalf.

Nor should we forget the inevitable burden-bearing of him who is our sympathizing friend. Because he sympathizes with us, he suffers with us; and because he unselfishly gives us a foremost place in his thoughts and feelings, our sorrows and needs burden him more heavily than his own—more heavily, perhaps, than they burden us. Much as it grieves us to know that his friendship for us is a cause of his being so heavily burdened,

let us consider that even his over-suffering in our behalf is an inevitable result, as it is an indubitable proof, of his close and sensitive sympathy with us as our friend. Even if, therefore, we cannot lift from his heart the burden of our sufferings, without removing from his heart the love which makes him the sharer and bearer of our heart's burdening, we can at least give him the comfort, in his burden-bearing, of knowing that we whose burdens he bears recognize this proof of his friendship, and render him love and honor accordingly.

To sympathize with those who are dear to us is a high privilege in life. This privilege involves heavy burden-bearing; but the very burden which it imposes on us becomes, through love, a crown of joy.

## XVI.

### *THE JOY OF SELF-SACRIFICE.*

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Self-denial is hard. Self-sacrifice is easy. Self-denial is liable to be painful and bitter, at the start. Self-sacrifice can be and ought to be—it is when it is hearty and genuine—delightsome and joyous from first to last. Yet there are those who confound the primary distinction between self-denial and self-sacrifice, and who even now use the words interchangeably, widely different as they are in their true meaning.

“Self-denial” is commonly defined as “the denial of one’s self; the forbearing [or the refusing] to gratify one’s own appetites or desires.” “Self-sacrifice” is defined as “the act of yielding up one’s own person, interests, or the like.” Even by these definitions a wide distinction between the two acts is clearly indicated. It cannot be easy or pleas-



ant, on the face of it, to deny one's self or to refuse to gratify one's appetites or desires. But it may be both easy and pleasant to yield, or to surrender, one's self, one's interests, one's possessions, one's powers, to another's sway, or to a cause which seems worthy of one's entire devotedness. Self-denial inevitably involves a battle with one's self. Self-sacrifice does not necessarily call for a struggle; it may be, indeed, the cessation of all conflict, and the glad and restful surrender of one's whole being to an all-controlling impulse or passion. Self-sacrifice may, it is true, involve self-denial; and again it may not. In any event, the self-sacrifice itself can be joyous, even though that which is incident to it, or consequent upon it, be painful and bitter.

Beyond the surface meaning of the term "self-sacrifice," there is, moreover, its primitive, or its etymological, meaning, which goes to shape its bearing and to control its effects. "Self" is one's own conscious entity. "Sacrifice" is from *sacer*, "sacred," and *facio*, "to

make" or "to perform;" hence, "to render up as holy, or to devote sacredly." Hence "self-sacrifice" is literally to devote one's self, with all that goes with or that belongs to one's self, to a holy cause, or to a holy personality. And in this view of self-sacrifice, it ought not to be other than a glad and joyous devotion. If, indeed, the devotion of self lacks the element of joyousness, it lacks the element of heartiness; and so, while it might pass for self-denial, it cannot pass for true self-sacrifice.

It is a sad illustration of the perversion, if not of the degradation, of the human intellect and of the human character, which is supplied in the fact that self-sacrifice—self-devotedness to that which is sacred and holy—has actually come to be looked upon so generally as synonymous with self-denial. It is as though a man were to say explicitly: "For me to be devoted to another in love, or in friendship; for me to be devoted to my country, to the welfare of my fellow-beings, or even to my God,—is contrary to all my

instincts and impulses and conscious desires. I do not want to be devoted to any one or to anything outside of my immediate personal self. In order to any sacred devotedness I must subject myself to a constant denial of the real longings of my lower and of my stronger self."

Now even if this had to be recognized as the true—and, as human nature is, as the inevitable—state of the case, its simple and explicit recognition would tend to aid one in struggling against the disclosure and the continued existence of such a pitiable condition of affairs. But, thanks be to God, it is not true that self-sacrifice always involves conscious self-denial, or always necessitates an obvious struggle with self. Self-sacrifice is, in one form or another, the truest joy of every true man or true woman; and the truer one is in real manhood or in real womanhood, the more potent is the sway of self-sacrifice in his or her life-course, and the less prominent in that sphere is the struggle in the direction of self-denial.

To love devotedly, and to deem one's loving a sacred devotedness, is to be self-sacrificing in love, but it is not necessarily to be consciously self-denying in one's love; even though at times it may be so. A young mother, for example, is self-sacrificing in her love for her child. In the exhibit of her self-sacrificing love, she may have to deny herself sleep which her tired physical nature craves.

The specific self-denial in this instance costs the mother a struggle; but the controlling self-sacrifice, of which the self-denial is an incident, does not. The one is not easy; the other is. The one is not in itself a delight; the other is a real joy. And as the mother's self-sacrificing devotedness gains in power by its exercise,—as all good is sure to gain,—the sense of self-denial, or even the need of self-denial as such, is less and less; the very self of the devoted one coming into subjection to, or into conformity with, the spirit and purpose of the self-sacrificing—the self-surrendered—devotion in love.

The young patriot who is swayed by a self-sacrificing devotion to his country in its peril, may have to deny himself daily while in the course of his training as a soldier; but because of the all-swaying power of his hearty and joyous self-sacrifice, as a patriotic soldier, he hardly thinks of the incidental self-denial involved in its exhibit. And by and by the sorrowful self-denial on his part is practically at an end; being overwhelmed by, and swallowed up in, his gladsome self-sacrifice. So, again, is it with the young student, in training for a part in an inter-collegiate boat-race. Any self-denial in the course of his training is of minor importance, in his mind, in comparison with his self-sacrifice, or with his self-devotedness, in behalf of the college of which he is a joyous representative.

Whenever, in fact, an all-absorbing devotedness has control of a man's affections and purposes, his consequent self-sacrifice in that direction practically precludes the idea of self-denial in the same direction. Self is

forgotten, in love for that which is far dearer than self. The busy man who finds not a minute to spare from his pressing office duties, and who would deem it an act of self-denial to give audience to any ordinary special visitor, springs with delight from his seat at the entrance of one whom he loves devotedly in a self-sacrificing friendship. There is no thought of self-denial in the glad surrender of his time in such an instance; his self-surrender is but a joyous self-sacrifice. So it is with one who makes glad gifts to a loved one in proof of his self-sacrificing devotedness to the recipient. So, moreover, it is with every self-forgetful devotee, everywhere and always.

No one of us wishes another to exercise self-denial on his account. But any one of us might well be glad to know that he is loved by another with a self-surrendering devotedness; a devotedness so hearty and entire that its every exhibit gives unalloyed joy to the self-sacrificing loving one. And as we might rejoice to be loved, so likewise we are

to find our joy in loving. The most joyous persons on the face of the earth are those who love with a self-forgetful, self-sacrificing love; not those who are thus loved, but those who thus love.

As it is manward, so it is Godward. There is practically no conscious self-denial in intelligent right-minded and all-controlling self-sacrifice toward God. Loving God as we ought to love him,—as we shall love him if we give him due thought in his relation to ourselves,—we can only joy in the privilege of showing our love for him in every way possible; and then the more we can do for him, or endure for him, the more we shall have of joy in the exhibit of our prevailing self-sacrifice toward him.

Just here it is that the Jews of old were constantly making the mistake which is so common among Christians to-day. God had shown to them that they might evidence their self-devotedness to him by bringing their offerings as sacrifices to his sanctuary. They fell into the error of looking upon

these proofs of their devotedness, as having a value because of their intrinsic worth. They practically lost sight of the essential difference there is between self-denial and self-sacrifice.

Therefore it was that the Lord, by his prophets, repeatedly reminded his people of the true import of all sacrifices, and of the folly of looking at them in any other light. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? . . . I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. . . . Bring no more vain oblations. . . . Cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord." And it was in this view of the truth that the man after God's own heart could say in all earnestness: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "And now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; and I will offer in



his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord."

Not as an act of self-denial, but as an act of loving self-surrender, is the Christian believer called upon to devote himself wholly and heartily unto God. "I beseech you, brethren," says the Apostle, "by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living [and a loving] sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable [and which ought to be your joyous] service." He who rightly heeds that injunction has no thought of self-denial in so doing. It is only, in fact, where devoted love is lacking, Godward or manward, that self-sacrifice is in any true sense to be reckoned as self-denial.

"So much we miss  
If love is weak, so much we gain  
If love is strong, God thinks no pain  
Too sharp or lasting to ordain,  
To teach us this."

## XVII.

### *LOVE GROWS THROUGH SERVING.*

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There is a certain depressing, and at the same time a certain stimulating, influence in the fact that, as a rule, love is not an out-growth of gratitude; that love does not commonly have its beginning or its larger progress in a recognition of benefits received; but rather it is a result—all unthought of, it may be—of service rendered, of sacrifice made, or of suffering endured. This truth is not always recognized; but it is none the less a truth for all that.

“Love begets love,” we say, but the progeny of love multiplies more rapidly and more surely in the loving one than in the one loved; and both the germ and the growth of the truest love are in the fact and in the possibility of doing or of enduring for another, rather than in the fact or in

the possibility of receiving from another. A parent is surer to love a child than a child is to love a parent, and parental love is stronger and more enduring than filial love; for not every child has done and endured for his parents, while every parent has made some surrender of self for his child. A mother's love is truer, tenderer, more abiding, than a father's love, not because of her superior nature, but because of her greater service. She has done and has endured for her child as no father is called or is privileged to do and to endure; and her love has welled up, and has overflowed, and has on-flowed, from the very depths of her innermost and holiest being accordingly.

And as it is in human love, so it is in the divine. No child of God can so love God as God loves his child. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Nor would it be possible for us so to love God as he loves us, unless it were possible that we had done as much for God

as God has done for us; for love comes and grows through serving, not through being served.

It is depressing, it is in a sense disheartening, to realize that we can hardly hope for the largest measure of love from those for whom we do most; from those whom—because of our very doing for them—we are enabled to love most dearly. It is a sad thought, it is a painful thought, that while our own love increases through our very loving and serving, the love of our loved ones cannot grow correspondingly except through a correspondence of loving service on their part in our behalf; that, in fact, their love for us must depend on and must be measured by what they do for us, not by what we do for them. Yet this is the law of our very nature in every sphere of being and doing.

The national flag is the symbol and the synonym of the country which it represents. The country is a source of blessing to every citizen under its government and its protec-

tion. To every citizen the national flag is a suggestion of benefits received, and ought to be a means of quickening gratitude and of promoting love; but what citizen so loves his country, or sees so much to rejoice over in the flag of his country, as the citizen-soldier who has served his country by daring and doing and suffering for his country's flag? When the old weather-beaten and bullet-pierced national flags, which have borne the brunt of many battles, are displayed in our city streets on some memorial occasion, no hearts are moved by their sight in loving devotedness like the hearts of those veteran soldiers who followed those flags in the hour of danger, who lived for them, and who were ready to die for them; for in the love of country, as in every other love, love grows by serving, rather than by being served.

And, after all, there is both stimulus and comfort in the thought that love gains through serving, even though it is not to be won by service. The real blessing of love is the

blessing of loving, rather than of being loved. In this sphere, as in every other, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Therefore, in all our loving, our thought should be, not what we can gain, but what we can give; not what we are to win, but what we are privileged to surrender or to endure. What a joy this adds to every privation and to every toil and trial for a loved one, in evidence of our loving.

Christina Rossetti tells of an Englishman sojourning in the East, who by accident broke a valuable household treasure in the home of his entertainer. To cheer him in his depression, his host said gracefully: "In a stranger the destruction of so costly an article might cause displeasure; but in a friend, every action has a charm." In comment on this apothegm of friendship—and true friendship is the highest and purest love—the poet-narrator says: "One friend I once possessed who would, I think, on occasion, have been capable of such graciousness. But why, if so it be, have I known one such

only? and why am I, alas! not myself the second?" And this standard of loving is the true ideal for us all. The more we can do for a friend, and the more we can surrender to a friend, the more we shall love a friend. Hence there is a gain to ourselves in all our sacrifices and sufferings for a friend; and a call to suffer and to sacrifice in friendship, is a call to gain and to grow in friendship.

For this same reason it is that one who is loved and served by another can both show love and gain in love by consenting to be loved and served by that loving one. Dr. Bushnell has shown most beautifully that "loving God is but letting God love us." Every loving parent can testify that he cares more for the privilege of loving his child than for any actual return of love which he may receive from that child. And all of us know that at times it is a severe test of our love, when we are called to accept gifts, or to accept service, from one who loves us, and for whom we can do nothing, beyond

this passive self-sacrifice. This measure of loving-service by love-prompted acceptance it is which has the hearty praise of Adelaide Procter:

"I hold him great who, for love's sake,  
Can give, with generous, earnest will;—  
Yet he who takes for love's sweet sake,  
I think I hold more generous still."

And the same self-surrendering service in receiving for love's sake, without the privilege of giving or serving in return, is emphasized in the words of Elaine Goodale:

"O love! through whom I seem to live,  
For whom I've idly wished to die,  
Help me to yield without a sigh  
A woman's dearest wish—to give!

"This hardest lesson may I learn—  
To hide my worthless self, nor shun  
Freely from thee, as from the sun,  
All to receive, and naught return."

And here is love's triumph and love's reward—in every sphere. Love is the gainer by what it does rather than by what it wins,



by what it gives rather than by what it receives, by what it surrenders rather than by what it obtains. We grow in love for our children by our sacrifices in their behalf. If they ever approach our love for them in their love for us, it will be through what they are led to do for us, rather than through what we are led to do for them. But whether they love us or not, our love for them can keep on growing just as long as we keep on serving. So in our truest friendships, the more we do and the more we yield, the more we shall love. And it may be that our highest service in behalf of a friend will be by our self-denying consent to receive his love and his service without any equivalent return. In such a case, we shall gain in love-power through our passive serving as truly as if our service were active; for the love-promoting element of service is self-surrender for another's sake; and that element is found in doing actively or in yielding passively—at the prompting of love.

Nor is love that finds its chiefest joy and

its chiefest reward in loving-service, more likely than a craving love to be an unrequited love. No father or mother is surer to be loved by his or her child, than the parent who thinks only of loving and of serving as a parent. No friend is surer of such a return-love as only the truest friendship knows, than the friend who asks only the privilege of loving and serving as a friend.

No other child of God has such rich experiences of the love of God as has the child of God whose joy is in serving God without a thought of any gain in that service beyond its own delight. And there is a reason for this winning of love through our growing in love; for only as we love another can we know another, and so be enabled to show that appreciative sympathy with the loved one which is the surest means of winning love in return. The order in nature—in human nature—is not first knowledge and then love, but first love and then knowledge. Serving promotes love, loving

promotes knowledge, knowledge makes sympathy a possibility; and appreciative sympathy wins love in return.

“Learn that to love is the one way to know  
Or God or man: it is not love received  
That maketh man to know the inner life  
Of them that love him; his own love bestowed  
Shall do it.”

If we would win love,—the love of a child or the love of a friend—we must first know fully the one whose love we would win. If we would have more knowledge in that direction, we must love in that direction more heartily. If we would love more heartily, we must serve more unselfishly, and more and more; for love grows only through serving.

## XVIII.

### *CONFLICTS OF FEELING.*

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The severest struggles to which a man can be summoned are always in his own mind and heart. No outside conflict can ever equal, in severity or in intensity, a conflict which is wholly within one's self. Any man who has lived a life of open struggle and combat, who has had his full share in the warfare of words, in the warfare of principles, in the warfare of actual physical encounters on the field of battle,—will tell you, unhesitatingly, that no contests in any of these spheres have equaled, or have approached, in their terribleness, or in their soul-racking power, those struggles which have been wholly within his own being, and where there was no sign of an enemy outside of himself. And in such struggles as these, souls which seem quietest, and which are

apparently never called to strife and combat, are often in as bitter warfare as are those who stand foremost among the world's recognized soldiers and heroes.

Nor is it in struggles with evident temptation to do wrong, that a soul has its severest conflicts. Not when the path of right and duty is clearly open before one's mind, and a seductive call is heard, urging him to turn away from that path toward pleasures or rewards in another direction, is the combat sorest; but it is when there is a question between two imminent seeming-duties, or when strong feeling urges vehemently to one course, while an equally strong feeling urges with like vehemence to a course directly opposite. So long as the whole soul can combine itself against an outside foe—either seen or felt—the conflict is simple, and the warfare is straightforward. But it is when the man is divided against himself that he cannot stand. And there are divisions of self in duty and in feeling, to every strong man, and to every tender-hearted woman, in the soul-conflicts

of their earthly experiences. These are hardest of all to meet and to endure.

Take this illustration from the story of such conflicts of feeling on the sea, as it was told to the writer by one who received it from the lips of its chief actor: Some years ago, one of the ocean steamers was approaching the coast of Nova Scotia, on her way from England to the United States. A dense fog had prevented her getting an observation for more than twenty-four hours, and her bearings were unknown. She was nearer the high granite cliffs of the bold coast than her commander suspected, and her prow was set toward them. Meanwhile the quick ears of some fishermen, in an inlet a little to the northward, caught the sound of the steamer's engines through the fog, and recognized her peril. Three of them pushed out hurriedly in a small boat, and pulled down toward the cliffs she was approaching. No time was to be lost. The steamer was coming on steadily, as to sure destruction. They made for her, shouting the alarm as they

pulled. The steamer's captain, who was anxiously on the watch, caught the sound of their warning voices, and saw their friendly boat through the fog, just as the huge gray cliffs loomed before him on his very bow. Not an instant could be spared. The one hope for the steamer was in his mind at the first glance. To go on for another second was to carry the steamer and all her passengers to certain death. To change her course at the instant was to run down the little boat with the brave men who were risking their lives for her safety. What an issue! What a choice!

"Helm a-port! Hard a-port! Quick!" rang the captain's voice. The steamer obeyed her helm, passed over her rescuers, and was herself in safety with all on board. Who supposes that that steamship captain's conflict of feeling in that moment of soulful struggle, was not sorer and bitterer than any which Nelson knew at Trafalgar, or Perry at Lake Erie? In the one case the soul itself was divided. In the other cases, the soul was at

one with itself, and its conflicts were with an outside foe. "If only I could have died for those brave men!" said the heavy-hearted captain, as he told of this supreme struggle of his life on the sea. "But as it was, there was no choice left to me, with my responsibility for all my passengers and crew." There has been more than one such conflict of feeling as that, on land as well as on sea. God pity those who have part in such!

There is even a sadder illustration than this, of a heart-rending conflict of feeling, in one of the Bible stories—the saddest and perhaps the most inexplicable of all the Bible stories. The little son of Jeroboam, the king of Israel, fell sick. The boy's loving mother went, at the father's request, to seek help from Abijah, the prophet of Jehovah. "I am sent to thee with heavy tidings," said the prophet, as the mother approached him. "Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house; and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die." What could that mother do then? Her sick child needed her



care. Her husband waited anxiously for her return. Her heart went out with love and longing toward them both. She would fain fly to their sides and give them ministry. But, if she should hasten to them, her coming would hasten desolateness and death to the home of her affections. While she tarried, her heart bled and their hearts ached. While she moved forward, the heavy shadow of her fatal presence moved on before her.

Was there ever a sorer battle than that in which that mother had a part? Was ever a heart more keenly than hers divided within itself? It was love against love. In that conflict, the drawing love of a mother toward her needy husband and child triumphed over a woman's loving prudence in delaying in order to advance the welfare of those she loved. She went on toward them, "and when she came to the threshold of the door the child died." There has been more than one such conflict of feeling as that, on the land and on the sea. God pity those who have part in such!

These conflicts are lesser and greater; yet their field is always the same. A baby child's bright eyes are dimming. An oculist's prescription calls for a stinging remedy. The mother's heart shrinks sorely from holding that child firmly while its eyes are tortured with the slowly dropping curative. Yet her heart shrinks still more sorely from yielding that loved child into hands less tender, even if more willingly resolute, than her own.

A widowed father sees his only daughter wooed by one who would take her away from her father's side. While yet there is a question in his mind as to the result of this wooing, that father's heart shrinks from speaking the word which would make his daughter's loss a certainty to him, with the possibility of a loss to her also; and it shrinks none the less from speaking the word which might lessen the daughter's happiness for life, even while the father was for a time the gainer thereby.

A husband is watching over a wife in a critical state of her health, when a mental burden oppresses him, which for her sake

he must withhold from her knowledge. His loving heart shrinks from a concealment which is at variance with their uniform habit hitherto; but it shrinks quite as strongly from a freeness which might prove fatal to her in her present health. He would fain do what she might wish him to do, yet he must not harm her by gratifying her wish so far.

A man discovers that he and his friend are in love with the same woman. Because of his love for that friend, and because of his belief that that woman would find a better husband in his friend than in himself, he decides to withdraw silently from the possibility of a competition there. His heart shrinks bitterly from seeming less in earnest and less affectionate in his bearing toward her whom he dearly loves; but it shrinks with equal positiveness from giving any word or look which would tend to draw her interest toward himself instead of toward his friend—who can yet be all the world to her. So, in his conflict of feeling, his heart-cry to Him who alone knows his heart-struggle, is:

"God give me the grace, if he gives me no right there,

To show her the best, not the worst, of my love!  
God give me the grace to give her, if need be,  
Only passionless peace, only tenderest care,  
Through year after year; though agonies lead me  
Still, year after year, to the gates of despair.  
Let me suffer alone the pangs of repression;  
Let me conquer and die, if need, for my love."

Just as Enoch Arden cried out, in the moment of his greatest conflict of feeling, when the question was whether a happy home, or his own heart, should be riven:

"O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou  
That didst uphold me on my lonely isle,  
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness  
A little longer! aid me, give me strength  
Not to tell her, never to let her know.  
Help me not to break in upon her peace."

For other reasons, a true-hearted man finds that his visits at a home, or his continued freedom of intercourse in a social circle, where his affection and his esteem have a permanent center, is a cause of unhappiness there, and may even be a means of injury to

those whose truest interests are very dear to him. His heart shrinks sorrowfully from seeming to turn away from those whom he prizes as his very life. It shrinks with a profounder regret from a course which will inevitably continue unhappiness to those whom he would benefit at any cost to himself.

Yet another finds himself newly estranged, through a sad misunderstanding, from one whom he esteems and honors unfailingly. He shrinks, painfully, from the idea of remaining under a misconception which shows him in so false and unfavorable a light. He shrinks, however, with a keener pain, from another effort to set himself right, in view of his oft-repeated experience in making matters worse, in this direction, by his attempts at their bettering. And so the strong heart hesitates to cry "Helm a-port!" And so the warm heart halts between going forward or holding back; with the cry of longing for help heard in the advance; and with the certainty of a fatal result of another forward step.

These are the saddest, sorest, bitterest conflicts which the soul can know here on earth; and to such conflicts of feeling many are called, in the mysterious leadings of God's providence. Some of them are even continued for weeks and months and years, in varying repetitions, and they shape the character of those who endure them.

In the very nature of things these conflicts of feeling being wholly within one's self, must be borne wholly by one's self, so far as human help or fellowship is concerned. He who suffers from a division of his heart, known only to himself and to his God, cannot have the sympathy—and the cheer which comes from a consciousness of having sympathy—which are secured to those who battle bravely with outside foes, and whose brave battling is in the sight of admiring or of sympathizing observers. The very fact that one's battling is known to others, relieves him of the added burden of concealing the bitterness of his battling; and so far his conflict is lessened and lightened.

"They suffer not who weep the most;  
They love not most who speak;  
*These* crave and cleave a brighter path,  
Beyond the helpless weak.

"Yea, rather tremble thou for those  
Who never told their pain,  
Who, stretched in secret on the wheel,  
Are silent, racked in vain."

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" cries out the agonized soul in its most terrible conflicts of spiritual feeling. And the same soul gives back the answer of rejoicing faith, through inspiration: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"Therefore will not we fear, though the earth do change,  
And though the mountains be moved in the heart of the seas;  
Though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled,  
Though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

## XIX.

### *BEING UNDERSTOOD, AS A CAUSE OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS.*

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We do not fully understand ourselves. We do not fully understand others. We think that others do not understand themselves. We are sure that others do not understand us. It seems to us that if we understood others better, we should find it easier to get along with them. It seems to us that if others understood us better, it would be easier for them to get along with us. Yet, as a matter of fact, most of our troubles with others grow out of our understanding others, and of our being understood by them. Indeed, it is through an understanding of one another that most of what we call our "misunderstandings" with one another come.

There are, it is true, many phases of our



character which are a perplexity to ourselves, and which we are right in supposing that others can never comprehend. So there are many phases in the character of others which must be a hopeless perplexity to them and to us. Moreover, every character is many sided, and one of its worst sides is likely to show itself at a time when it would seem as if the exhibit of one of its better sides would have presented the entire personality in a very different aspect. Yet it is what we do clearly understand, of those whom we know most intimately, that is the prevailing cause of our liking or of our disliking them; and it is what is clearly understood of ourselves by those who know us best, that mainly influences their feelings with reference to us.

That which is least understood in the character of ourselves would, as a rule, have least influence in the shaping of the estimate of us by those who know us well, if it were all made clear; and that which we do not understand of those with whom we are intimate would, as a rule, make little difference

in our feelings toward them, if it were comprehended by us fully. There are, of course, exceptional instances of concealment of character, resulting in a wholly false estimate of one whom we have good opportunities of observing; but in the ordinary intercourse of life, especially in those phases of it which give us most concern, the more frequent cause of misunderstandings is in understanding and in being understood.

At the close of the American civil war there returned to one of the New England towns a former citizen of that place who had been in arms against his government, and in consequence had been absent from home a number of years. Meeting a prominent gentleman on the street, the returned citizen reached out his hand with a word of hearty greeting; but, to his surprise, the gentleman gave him no sign of recognition. "You don't know me," he said. "Oh, yes, I *do*!" said the other, looking him full in the face, and then passing him by. Aside from any question of propriety in the case, that inci-

dent illustrates the truth that many a trouble which we ascribe to our being misunderstood arises from the fact that we are very well understood.

We are often understood by others at points where we misunderstand ourselves. We think ourselves generous; they know that we are selfish. We think ourselves free from vanity or egotism; they know our weakness in that very line. We think ourselves full of kindness of heart; they know that a vein of unkindness runs through all our estimates of others. We think ourselves careful and exact in speech; they know that inaccuracy and exaggeration are the rule with us. We think ourselves uniform in our cheerfulness of spirit; they know that we are moody and impulsive to an exceptional degree. We think ourselves reasonably sensible; they know that we show ourselves weak and silly in the lesser and the larger affairs of life. We think ourselves industrious and capable; they know that we waste more time and strength than we use.

We think that we have the courage of our convictions, and that we are not afraid to be independent in thought and action; they know that timidity is a chief trait in our characters, and that our whole course in life is governed by what others think, or may think, about us.

And so all the way up and down the standard of comparative judgments. When, in such a case, we see how others estimate us, our impulse is to say: "But you don't understand me." Their well-considered response to us would, however, be: "Oh, yes! I *do*." The misunderstandings between others and ourselves, in every instance of this sort, grow out of the good understanding of us by others.

Our leading characteristics may be just the opposite from what we suppose; and when we think we are showing a good side of our nature, we may really be showing a bad side. But beyond all this, even when we have a good side to show and are showing it, we may be disagreeable to those whom we like,

and we may jar upon them by the exhibit of the very best qualities in our minds and characters. It is a great mistake, and it is a very common mistake, to suppose that if our best selves could be seen at their best, they would surely commend themselves to those who are worthy, especially to those whose qualities are in the direction of our own highest ideals. When we consider it, however, we perceive that our likes and dislikes are not limited by the moral element involved; and as it is with our likes and dislikes, so it is with the likes and dislikes of others.

There are persons whose ways are repellent to us chiefly because of prominent characteristics in them, which we admit are good in themselves, but with which, as thus manifested, we are not in accord. It is not that we do not understand these persons, but that we do understand them, that causes us to be repelled by them, or to be jarred upon by their every exhibit of their best peculiarities. Yet all the while they may have a special regard for us, and may desire most earnestly

to make a good impression upon us by the manifestation of that which is best in their natures. We do not like them. We cannot like them. And it is because we understand them, that they and we are always at a misunderstanding. So, again, we may be disagreeable to others because of our choicest characteristics; and even while we are known as we are at our best we may not be liked, simply because we cannot be. The misunderstandings, in such a case, between ourselves and those whom we honor and admire, are hopeless, because of the understanding between us. We understand them at their best, and therefore we like them. They understand us at our best, and therefore they cannot like us.

It is what we are, that stands in the way of our being what we ought to be. It is what we are that causes us to be seen in an unfavorable light by those who see us as we are. We can deceive ourselves into the thought that we are what we ought to be instead of what we are; but we cannot always deceive

others on that point. Hence it is because we are understood by others while we are misunderstood by ourselves, that there are so frequent misunderstandings between ourselves and others, to their regret and to our surprise.

There is a gain in realizing this important truth, that many a regretted misunderstanding with one whom we prize grows out of our understanding and of our being understood. We are understood by others better than we understand ourselves. The good side which we think we have, may exist only in our fancy. The good side which is ours, may be a barrier to our being liked by those whose favor we long for. If one who has an opportunity of knowing us—especially if it be one whose intelligence and judgment on other matters we value—thinks that we have a fault, a weakness, or a folly, which we have been surest we were free from, let us not say that we are misunderstood; but let us realize that we have, more probably, misunderstood ourselves; and then let us try to profit by

our new knowledge of our needs and lack, in the hope of doing and of being better as the years go by.

If, again, one who uniformly draws out the best that is in our nature, and toward whom we unfailingly entertain feelings of the highest regard, finds nothing winsome and congenial in our best qualities, and in our most wisely considered endeavors, let us not say that if we were better known we should be better liked; but let us realize that it is because we are understood so well that we seem always to be in a misunderstanding just there; and then let us determine to do our best and to be at our best, whether we are understood or are misunderstood.

In short, if our misunderstandings with others have grown out of our being understood to have poor qualities which we did not suspect, there is a call to us to correct this misunderstanding of ourselves. If, on the other hand, our misunderstandings with others are a result of the unwinsomeness of our best qualities there is a call to us to



keep up and to keep on at our best, even though the being understood at our best gives us no gain beyond the gain of being at and of doing our best. Meanwhile we ought to understand ourselves well enough to know, that in ourselves at our best there is little enough to be commended by any one, and more than enough to be disapproved of by all.

## XX.

### *WHAT BLUNDERERS WE ARE!*

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To call a man a blunderer is next to calling him a fool; and many a man would rather be charged with a crime than a blunder. Yet, as a matter of fact, we are blunderers, each and all of us, in every line of speech and action and in all our intercourse with our fellows; and the difference between the best of us and the worst of us, in this matter, is a difference of degree, and not of kind. The blunders of some of us are more marked and more untimely than the blunders of the others of us; and this it is that causes some to be stigmatized as blunderers, while others escape that specific characterization.

To *blunder* is "to flounder about," "to err," to bear one's self as though *blinded* or dazed, through seeing for the moment two or more different things *blended* and confused. Who

of us can say that his mental sight is always clear; that his mind is never blinded or dazed; that to him there is never a confused blending of things that ought to be looked at by him as distinct and separate? To blunder is to be at fault; it is to say or to do an unwise thing; it is to fall short of, or to go beyond, the right and graceful limit of speech or of action in the premises. Who of us can say that he is always free from such mistakes as this? Not to blunder is to be without error, and to conform always and in all things to the perfect standard of absolute right; it is to be always up to, and never beyond, the line of highest wisdom in whatever is to be said or done. Would any one of us think of making such a claim as this for himself?

The comic papers are constantly illustrating "things which would better have been left unsaid;" yet these illustrations give but a faint idea of the number and the magnitude of such blunders in the ordinary intercourse of life. How often it is that two friends, after an incidental meeting in the

street, or after a pleasant evening together, recall a remark or a silence on the one side or the other which is obviously capable of such a misconception as would wretchedly misrepresent the spirit and feelings of the one of whom it is remembered, and they are disturbed in mind accordingly! Just in proportion to one's sensitive desire to be considerate of the other's welfare and tastes, is his liability to recall his own blundering failure at such a time, and to be grieved by it when he sees it as it might have seemed to the other.

In fact, with those who are most tenderly regardful of the feelings and interests of others, the regrets over remembered blunders after every meeting with those whose good opinion they value highest, are likely to be more prominent in their minds than is any sense of satisfaction with their successful endeavors to be at their best, and to express the confidence and regard for their companions which controls them. Nor is it always an undue sensitiveness on their part

that causes them this discomfort of mind; for they *have* blundered in their words and ways, and in many a case they have given discomfort by their blunderings. It is, indeed, more frequently by blunderings than by intentional unkindnesses or slights that ordinary friends are the means of pain or of doubt to one another.

Not only in the field of social intercourse between friends, but in the walks of practical business life, in the more serious occupations of the professional leader, and in the realms of diplomacy and government, the best of men are frequently blundering; and he who looks back upon his course in life in any one of these spheres with any degree of fair discrimination, is led to wonder that he could so often have blundered so wretchedly, and that his blunders have not been his ruin. The keenest business man sees in almost every transaction of his life that he might have done better at one point or another, and that, if others had seen his blunders as he now sees them, he would have suffered for them

more sorely than he has. And every once in a while a business man who has had the reputation of being peculiarly bright and keen, and free from danger of blundering, goes down all of a sudden, because of some blunder of his that is simply one blunder too many.

The average minister, or lawyer, or physician, or editor, keeps up in spite of his blundering, or fails finally because of some blunder that stands out so prominently that it compasses his overthrow. A man may have credit for wisdom and prudence even until he is the senior in his honorable profession in the great city of his home, and then may, by a single blundering speech, win a place on a permanent pillory of ridicule because of the influence of his blunder in changing the political control of the government of a great nation. One trained in the arts of diplomacy in a life-time of public service may lose all accumulated credit for special skill and tact and wisdom as a diplomat by one act of blundering, which at last stands out as a blunder

unmistakably. There is no such thing among men as living above all perils of blundering.

Who of us ever looked back upon an evening social gathering, where he was either guest or host, without recalling regretfully one and another instance of his blundering in what he said or did, or in what he failed to say or do, in his intercourse with those whom he was particularly desirous of pleasing, or before whom he especially wished to appear to advantage? Who of us ever recalled the manner in which he expressed his gratitude for a service rendered to him, or a favor shown him, or a courtesy extended to him, without remembering that at the best he blundered where a blunder seemed as inexcusable as it was untimely? Who of us ever attempted to say a word of graceful compliment, or of tender considerateness, or of heartfelt sympathy, to one whose position or character commanded exceptional respect, without seeming to have blundered at the very point where he was most anxious not to blunder? Who of us, in fact, can recall any

feature of his social exploits that is at all comparable with his blunderings?

Let no one of us congratulate himself on being free from blundering; for every one of us is a blunderer. Let no one of us be over-despondent when he finds that he has blundered; for no one of us is alone in his blundering. Let no one of us think lightly of his blundering, or fail to watch against his liability to blunder; for the best reputation in the world may be dimmed, if not destroyed, by a blunder; and, even though the blunderer has already surmounted and outlived a thousand of his blunders, one more blunder may cause his overthrow. Let no one of us judge harshly the blunders of another, or wonder that another should blunder as he does; for every one of us has cause to ask the charitable judgment of others because of his blundering, and every one of us ought to see to it that he judges others with the spirit in which he would be judged.

All of us are blunderers together; and the prayer of every one of us should be:



Lord, keep me from the consequences of my  
wretched blundering!

“Our faults no tenderness should ask,  
The chastening stripes must cleanse them all;  
But for our blunders—oh, in shame  
Before the eyes of heaven we fall.”



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